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*Clouet*

FRANCIS I

*Louvre*



# FRANCE

A SHORT HISTORY  
OF ITS POLITICS, LITERATURE, AND ART  
FROM EARLIEST TIMES  
TO THE PRESENT

BY  
HENRY DWIGHT SEDGWICK

*Une des plus belles aventures humaines, l'histoire  
de la France ancienne et de la France moderne.*

ANATOLE FRANCE



WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

BOSTON  
LITTLE, BROWN, AND COMPANY

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AD  
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*Tui e vicino sectare vestigia . . . durum grande, difficile, sed magna sunt praemia. . . . Cumque tibi cuperem ingenioli mei aliquod offerre munusculum . . . susceptum opus tuo nomini consecravi. . . . Tuae benevolentiae erit, non eruditionem nostram, quae vel nulla, vel parva est, sed pronam in te suscipere voluntatem, ut nos ad caetera provoces. . . . Si qui autem sunt, quibus dedicationem huius voluminis ante promisi, ignoscant incredibili in te amoris meo, et quidquid tibi scripsi, sibi scriptum arbitrentur.*  
*Charitas enim benigna est.*

SANCTUS HIERONYMUS





## PREFACE

THIS book is intended for boys, young men, or girls at school and college, for travelers bound for France, or for readers that stay at home, content to avoid the restless sea, grimy train, and tumultuous motor car; and its aim is to give a slight but continuous sketch in outline of the political growth of France from the time when she first became a Latin country up to the end of the Great War — in short, a brief biography of France. And as a nation, at least for the readers whom I have in mind, consists not of the dumb many, who move uneasily under the spur of economic or other elementary social impulses and appetites, but of the few who have stepped forth out from among the multitude to give utterance, in one form or another, to the national soul, I have said little of economic or social movements, and have allotted what space I could to the men to whom we owe the most definite expression of what seem to me typical French traits and qualities in art, in literature, in the conduct and the appreciation of life.

As one cannot draw up an indictment against a nation, so one cannot catch its likeness in so brief a compass as this book, and it is obvious that the familiar words, "clarity," "logic," "measure," "poise," and so forth, in which our critics indulge themselves, are quite as often out of place as in — one need but think of the Revolution, of the Commune of 1871, of the French crusaders, of Saint Bernard, of Joan of Arc, of Rabelais, of Victor Hugo, of Lourdes, of the *cochers de Paris*, of Matisse, of Honegger, of the croquet players in the Luxembourg gardens, of the fishermen who display from the Pont d'Alma to Notre-Dame how infinite are the depths of human patience. No; "measure," "moderation," "poise," "good sense," will not do.

At least, so it seems to me, and I make no attempt to put forward other appropriate epithets. I have tried merely to recount what seems to me characteristic, to introduce such matters and such persons as the reader will have heard of in books or travels and would like, as I think, to be better acquainted with, and then to let the reader decide for himself what France and the French people are really like.

*Boston, April 1929*

H. D. S.

## CONTENTS

PREFACE . . . . .	vii
I LIGURIANS, CELTS, ROMANS . . . . .	3
II FROM MÉROVÉE TO CHARLEMAGNE . . . . .	14
III FROM CHARLEMAGNE TO HUGUES CAPET . . . . .	23
IV A ROLL CALL OF THE PROVINCES . . . . .	32
V THE TWELFTH CENTURY . . . . .	46
VI THE REIGN OF SAINT LOUIS (1226-1270) . . . . .	58
VII POLITICAL EVENTS (1270-1328) . . . . .	68
VIII THE HUNDRED YEARS' WAR . . . . .	76
IX JEAN LE BON, CHARLES V, CHARLES VI . . . . .	85
X BURGUNDIANS AND ARMAGNACS (1392-1422) . . . . .	96
XI JOAN OF ARC . . . . .	106
XII CHARLES VII, LOUIS XI (1422-1483) . . . . .	115
XIII THE RENAISSANCE . . . . .	129
XIV FRANÇOIS I AND HENRY II . . . . .	141
XV FRANÇOIS II, CHARLES IX, HENRI III . . . . .	154
XVI HENRI IV . . . . .	166
XVII LOUIS XIII AND RICHELIEU . . . . .	174
XVIII AUTOCRACY AND THE FRONDE (1615-1661) . . . . .	182
XIX THE REIGN OF LOUIS XIV . . . . .	191
XX LOUIS XIV ( <i>continued</i> ) . . . . .	202



XXI	THE ARTS UNDER LOUIS XIV	. . .	214
XXII	THE END OF THE REIGN	. . .	224
XXIII	THE REGENCY AND LOUIS XV	. . .	231
XXIV	REVOLUTIONARY FACTORS	. . .	244
XXV	THE GENERATION BEFORE THE REVOLUTION		256
XXVI	TURGOT, NECKER, AND THE AMERICAN WAR		264
XXVII	THE SUMMONS OF THE STATES-GENERAL	. . .	270
XXVIII	THE STATES-GENERAL	. . .	278
XXIX	TRIUMPH OF THE JACOBINS	. . .	290
XXX	THE TERROR	. . .	301
XXXI	THE NAPOLEONIC EPIC	. . .	308
XXXII	FROM LOUIS XVIII TO LOUIS NAPOLEON	. . .	318
XXXIII	THE SECOND EMPIRE	. . .	330
XXXIV	THE THIRD REPUBLIC	. . .	344
XXXV	FROM DREYFUS TO THE GREAT WAR	. . .	356
XXXVI	FIFTY YEARS OF ART	. . .	367
XXXVII	FIFTY YEARS OF LITERATURE	. . .	379
XXXVIII	THE END	. . .	390
	INDEX	. . .	397

## ILLUSTRATIONS

FRANCIS I ( <i>Clouet</i> ) . . . . .	<i>Frontispiece</i>
ROMAN AMPHITHEATRE AT ARLES . . . . .	44
CARCASSONNE . . . . .	80
CHARLES VII ( <i>Fouquet</i> ) . . . . .	106
REIMS CATHEDRAL . . . . .	112
CHÂTEAU OF CHAUMONT . . . . .	134
MARIE DE MÉDICIS ( <i>Rubens</i> ) . . . . .	176
LOUIS XIV ( <i>Benoist</i> ) . . . . .	194
VERSAILLES . . . . .	216
THE ARREST OF LOUIS XVI AT VARENNES . . . . .	288
NAPOLEON . . . . .	310
NAPOLEON III AND BISMARCK AFTER SEDAN ( <i>Camp-</i> <i>hausen</i> ) . . . . .	346
MAP OF FRANCE . . . . .	418





# FRANCE



## I

### LIGURIANS, CELTS, ROMANS

THE fair kingdom of France is more beautiful, so Beaumarchais says, than any other except the Kingdom of Heaven. He had good reasons to justify his patriotic pride. To begin with, the boundaries of France are admirable. Her far-stretching coasts — on the Mediterranean Sea, on the Atlantic Ocean, on the English Channel — connect her with all the waters of the world. To separate her from Spain, the Pyrenees run from sea to sea; the Alps divide her from Italy; while the Vosges mountains make a secondary line of defense toward Germany. Her rivers flow as if some genius of earth, skilled in landscape gardening, had ordered their directions. The Seine, rising in Burgundy, gathers in the waters of the Marne and Oise, and flows through the Île-de-France and Normandy into the English Channel. The Loire, from its fountain in Languedoc, winds north-erly through Lyonnais, Bourbonnais, and Nivernais, where the Allier coming from Auvergne joins it, and then, bending to the west, glides past Orléans and Tours, to empty into the Bay of Biscay the confluent waters of the Cher, the Indre, the Loir (without an *e*), and the Sarthe, as well as its own. The Garonne flows down from the Pyrenees, circles toward the northwest, picking up on its way the Tarn, the Lot, and the Dordogne, and ends, a great estuary, in the Gironde. Towards the Belgian frontier the Meuse and the Moselle run north and east to join the Rhine, while near Switzerland the Rhone, issuing forth from the Lake of Geneva, after a westward

journey to meet the Saône, rushes south to the Mediterranean.

It has been said that the word most apt to characterize France is variety — and rightly so, for France is the Cleopatra among nations, and offers an infinite variety, from the apple orchards of Normandy and the iron ores of Flanders, from the vineyards of Bordeaux and Burgundy, through fields of wheat, oats, rye, barley, through stretches of beet fields, through gardens of peas and beans, through meadows, lowland and upland, through forests that cover a sixth of the country and furnish glades for landscape painters, lairs for wild boars, and delightful places of adventurous pilgrimage for some chance Scot traveling with a donkey, down to the meridional regions of the olive, the almond, and the mulberry.

During the dim ages before the Christian Era this fair land was occupied by various peoples, of few arts and scanty accomplishment. Thousands of years ago, in the preglacial period, there were men who hunted and fought with implements of flint, carved bones, and drew pictures of the aurochs and the reindeer on the roofs of their caves. Down in the south of France, in Guyenne and Foix, and roundabout, are many caves and grottoes — grotte de Moustier, grotte de la Madelaine, grotte de Laugerie-Haute, for instance — rich in such memorials. Much nearer our time other peoples came in; one race followed another. I shall not attempt to distinguish these except very roughly, with a caution to the reader that the adjectives Iberian, Ligurian, Celt, are rather literary than scientific terms — political, I am told, not ethnological.

The Iberians, slender dark-haired men of the Mediterranean race, crossed the Pyrenees, coming up from Spain, and settled themselves in the pleasant places between the



mountains and the Garonne. Later, apparently, another people, the Ligurians, also (according to the usual theory) little men with dark eyes and hair, came from the east and spread far and wide over France. But neither Iberians nor Ligurians, as such, have left more than slight traces of their presence, unless one regards the Basques, a people few in numbers but of proud and isolated individuality, who live under the mountains near the Spanish border to the southwest, as relations of one or the other. In the sixth century Greeks coasted along the Mediterranean shore and founded the city of Marseilles, and other settlements, bringing with them the vine of Dionysus, the olive tree, dear to Pallas Athene, the use of money, and the art of letters that they had learned of the Phœnicians.

But by far the most important invaders were the people who spoke Celtic — an imaginative, gifted race, described as tall, blond, and fair-haired, who had already made for themselves a dominant position in central Europe. Some say that they were not very different from the Ligurians; ethnical theories are plentiful as blackberries. At any rate, some of these Celts, in the sixth and fifth centuries before Christ, crossed the Rhine, first in small numbers, and then more and more, until by the year 300 B.C. they had conquered the earlier inhabitants and were well established in the larger part of what is now France. The invaders intermarried with the subject races, who must have been much more numerous than themselves, giving and receiving qualities and defects, until, in the course of time, Iberians, Ligurians, and whatever indigenous peoples there may have been (always excepting the stiff-necked Basques), were ultimately merged in a new hybrid race, and disappear as separate peoples.

These Celts were known to the Romans as Gauls. In the northwest they seem to have kept their distinguishing blond complexion, but in the central part of Gaul and in the south they acquired the traits of the Alpine and Mediterranean races with whom they intermarried, and became characterized by short stature and swart looks. Taken together, conquerors and the conquered inhabitants, with whom they mingled and blended, constitute the main stock of the French nation, but that stock either did not possess, or had no opportunity to show, those traits that the word "French" calls up to our minds — grace, elegance, delicacy, subtlety, simplicity; in other words, these Gauls did not become French until they became a Latin nation in consequence of the Roman conquest. By that conquest the graft was made that enabled the Celtic stock to bear the rich fruits of French civilization. In due time the Franks were to contribute their name, and they and other Teutonic tribes were to infuse new elements into the national character, but the imposition upon Gaul of the Roman language, Roman law, Roman customs, Roman literature and science, was the crucial event in the formation of the French nation.

Cæsar opens his famous book, *De bello gallico*, with the words, "*Gallia est omnis divisa in partes tres*; of which the Belgæ inhabit one, the Aquitani the second, and the third a people whom we call Gauls, but who call themselves Celts." At this time (58 B.C.) the merger of the different races to which I have alluded had but partially taken place. The Celts occupied the central region between the Seine and the Garonne; the Belgæ, also a Celtic people with an admixture of Teutonic blood, dwelt between the Seine and the Rhine; while to the south, between the Garonne and the Pyrenees, in Aquitania, was a blended race of Iberians and Ligurians, with but few

Celts as yet, and the unintermarrying Basques, whom Cæsar does not distinguish. Each of these three nationalities was divided into numerous tribes.

Cæsar's coming was by no means the first meeting of Gaul and Roman. During the period of their migrations, these Gauls or Celts had crossed the Alps and established themselves in the valley of the Po, in what the Romans called *Gallia cisalpina*. A raiding chieftain, Brennus, in 390 B.C., captured the city of Rome, and merely failed to take the citadel because, so Livy says, cackling geese warned the drowsy sentinels. The two races had met, and the struggle was bound to continue until one should master the other. The final grapple might have come earlier, but Rome had other adversaries to vanquish first. At the close of the second century B.C. her armies crossed the Alps. Marseilles opened the door by calling for aid against a neighboring tribe. In 125 B.C. a Roman consul subdued one little Gallic state near the Mediterranean; the next year the consul Sextius subdued another, and founded a town, Aix (*Aquæ Sextiæ*), that preserves his memory. Then came the turn of the Allobroges, who dwelt by the upper reaches of the Rhone, and then that of the Arverni; and the conquerors continued until they had converted the southeastern corner of Gaul into *Provincia nostra*, now Provence. The conquered province was restive, but the Gauls had no capacity for compromise and union among themselves. Roman influence pushed in, sowing discord. *Divide et impera*. The last act was played when Cæsar, having served his term as consul, received *Provincia nostra* as one of his proconsular provinces.

Cæsar has told the story of the conquest in his celebrated *Commentaries* — frankly like a soldier, according to some, disingenuously like a politician, according to

others. On its face the story appears honest. First he defeated the Helvetii, who forsook their homes in Switzerland to emigrate into Gaul; next he drove Ariovistus, and such of his Germans as escaped slaughter, back across the Rhine; and then he overcame, singly or in confederacies, the various tribes in Gaul, which he reckons at seventy-two. The final struggle was with the gallant Vercingetorix, who effected a coalition against the Romans and fought with a courage and a capacity that deserved a happier issue. His entrenched camp at Alesia, Côte d'Or, was captured in 52 B.C. It is said that during these years of fighting and butchery some two million Gauls were killed or made slaves; but, on the other hand, Roman dominion put down war between tribe and tribe, it brought safety and security, it opened the door to industry and prosperity, it delivered the country from German invaders, it stopped human sacrifice, it bestowed Latin civilization, which, as I have said, was the happy factor that, in the course of revolving centuries, out of the raw material, Gaul, produced the finished product, France.

From this time on for five hundred years Gaul remained a Roman province. On the solid foundation of *Provincia nostra* the Romans built up the latinization of all Gaul. Their method of procedure was to found many Roman cities, called colonies — Narbonne, Aix, Arles, Béziers, Fréjus, Orange, Vienne, Nîmes, Carpentras, Avignon, Carcassonne, almost all within *Provincia nostra*, and a few beyond, such as Lyons, Mayence, Cologne. The subjugation had been thorough; under the Empire there was but one small revolt, easily suppressed. A single cohort, twelve hundred men, stationed at Lyons, was a sufficient army of occupation.

The only danger to Gaul lay in attacks from across



the Rhine. In the time of Augustus, Drusus entertained the project of subduing Germany, but death prevented him from its accomplishment. His brother Tiberius took up the plan, and executed a masterly campaign along the Elbe. After this, however, the incompetent Varus met with his great defeat (9 A.D.); and for many generations the Euphrates seemed a place of far greater danger than the Rhine. The Emperors Trajan and Hadrian built a wall from the river Main to the Danube. And, later, Marcus Aurelius proposed to push his way north from the Danube to the Baltic Sea, and had he lived he might have done so, but on his death (180 A.D.) the wretched Commodus turned his back on imperial duties and nuzzled in debauchery. By this time, too, the strong arms of Rome had become limp and nerveless, and thoughts of conquest had given place to thoughts of defense. Fortune had turned. Rome lay with her shoulders on the ground, with Barbarian knees upon her chest and Barbarian hands at her throat.

Under Roman rule Gaul prospered. At first the people were allowed to keep their own customs and administer their own laws, subject to the obligation, differing among different tribes, of paying subsidies and providing soldiers. But as time went on, and the Roman government became more and more centralized, more and more bureaucratic, the administration of Gaul was more and more committed into the hands of Roman officials. The country was reorganized politically, new provinces marked off, and a chief city in each important locality lifted above its fellows as the centre of local administration. Little by little individuals were admitted to Roman citizenship, then communities, and, finally, Caracalla's edict (214 A.D.) bestowed that franchise upon all free men. The old Druids, at least as persons of political importance, disap-

pear; or, if some linger on, their old significance is gone. They had constituted a priestly order of great power, with charge of sacrifices, of the relations between men and the gods, and also of various legal and political duties. But under Roman rule the Roman gods, a heterogeneous collection, gathered from Asia Minor, Egypt, Greece and elsewhere, were introduced, together with Roman ritual, and the older religious institutions and worship went down before them. Gaul was as completely latinized as Spain, almost as Italy.

This prosperous condition of Gaul as an integral part of the Roman Empire continued as long as the prosperity of the Empire endured. In the reign of Marcus Aurelius the decline began; terrible pests, brought from the East, swept off great numbers of the people and made havoc among the legions. By the middle of the third century, disorder and anarchy within, and invasions from without, presaged a tragic future. Diocletian (284-305), Theodosius (379-395), and other strong emperors, held ruin back, but it could not be for long. But all this belongs to the general history of the decline and fall of the Roman Empire. The only matter of special interest to us during the period that Gaul was a province of the Empire is the introduction of Christianity.

The Roman religion was primarily a state affair; worship was a collection of traditional ceremonies and sacrifices performed by magistrates. There was nothing to touch the heart or to kindle the imagination. So long as the worshipers were Romans of the old stock like Cato Major, such a religion was satisfactory enough; but when the Roman State included millions of people of different temperaments and sensibilities, and life even in Rome became perplexed and troubled, it would do no longer. From the superstitious, imaginative, sensuous East new

ideas and worships came thronging in, bringing religions of passion and mystery. The cult of Cybele, of Isis, of Mithra, and others came to Italy and passed from Italy into Gaul. These were personal religions, preaching sin, purification, salvation, and immortality. Finally Jews brought Christianity to Marseilles. But the first record of Christians in Gaul is contained in a letter written during the reign of Marcus Aurelius, in the year 177, by members of the church of Lyons and Vienne to their fellow Christians in Asia Minor. This is one of the most tragic of letters. It describes the refusal of both men and women to sacrifice to the pagan gods and their martyrdom in consequence. It is needless to say that Marcus Aurelius, noblest of men, knew nothing of this obscure religious sect, except that current rumor and educated belief denounced it for gross and secret vices. The populace of Lyons and Vienne believed these stories, slaves repeated them as facts, and, in the eyes of the law, men that refused to acknowledge the state religion, refused to serve in the army, refused to perform duties obligatory upon all citizens, were rebels, mutineers, traitors. Educated Romans regarded the Christian creed as a degrading superstition. But the educated were few, the ignorant many. Beliefs that made heroes and celestial powers out of slaves and outcasts could not but gain converts among the miserable masses. Blandine, a poor slave girl, one of the martyrs to whom I have just referred, who was subjected to unspeakable tortures, has become Sainte Blandine; and Lyons may claim a leading part in the Christianization of Gaul.

Soon after these martyrdoms, Saint Irénée, who came from Asia Minor, became bishop of the church of Lyons. His is the first great name in the long list of distinguished Gallic bishops. His fulminations against the Gnostics, an annoying set of people who muddled neoplatonic ideas

with Christian doctrines, rendering both very wild and obscure, and his exposition of the Christian creed have won for him the title of the first Christian theologian. Toward the middle of the next century two famous saints, Saint Saturnin, first bishop of Toulouse, and Saint Denis, first bishop of Paris, suffered martyrdom during the persecution under the Emperor Decius (249-251). But within three generations Christianity had grown so strong that Constantine decided to become a Christian, and in the year 314 he convoked at Arles the first council of bishops summoned together by an emperor. The next great name in the Gallic church is that of Saint Hilaire (*d.* 367), bishop of Poitiers, who rendered a service of greatest political consequence by maintaining the cause of orthodoxy, — of the consubstantiality of the Father and the Son, against the Arian idea that their substances were similar but not the same, — for the orthodoxy of the Gallic church was the cause of the orthodoxy of the Franks, and the orthodoxy of the Franks caused their pact with the Papacy that wrought so enduring an effect upon the history of Europe.

Next comes Saint Martin of Tours, that most charming of saints, who won artistic immortality by cutting his superabundant cloak in two for a beggar's sake. In the lesser permanence of actual life, originally a soldier from Pannonia, Martin became an ascetic, a monk, a missionary, a bishop, and evangelized the country folk, who were much tardier than the dwellers in cities to renounce paganism. After his death his holy bones cured cripples, even against their will, and more churches have been dedicated to him than to any other saint after Saint Peter and the Holy Virgin.

These great saints were also political builders, for religion was the cement that held society together during the

Dark Ages. At the death of Saint Martin (397) Gaul was Christian and orthodox, and its ecclesiastical organization stable and strong enough to hold and preserve the fragments of Latin civilization when the great Barbarian migrations swept over the frontiers and overwhelmed the Roman world. During the third and fourth centuries assaults and inroads had been frequent enough, but by the beginning of the fifth there was no pretense of defense and the Barbarians came at will. To give details here is impossible. In the year 451 Attila with hordes of Huns crossed the Rhine. He sacked Metz and marched westward. The people of Paris were in alarm. A young girl — you will see her as an old woman watching over the city in Puvis de Chavannes's picture in the Panthéon — bade them be of good courage, for Paris should not be harmed, and so Sainte Geneviève became their patron saint. The Roman State rallied to its last great effort, and with the help of Visigoths, Franks, and Burgundians defeated the Huns near Châlons-sur-Marne in a two days' battle. But even this victory could not reëstablish Roman rule; the Visigoths set up their kingdom between the Loire and the Pyrenees, the Burgundians theirs in the valley of the Rhone, while the Franks occupied the north between the Somme and the Rhine. We have now reached the end of the ancient world, and must leave France amidst her first gropings after a new order to replace the old for another chapter.



## II

### FROM MÉROVÉE TO CHARLEMAGNE

THE Franks, a tall, fair-haired people, were destined to a brilliant preëminence among their Teutonic kindred. They confuse the course of our story by uniting and combining for a time component parts that were afterwards to break asunder into France and Germany. At the battle of Châlons they were led by a legendary Mérovée, their chief or king, who has given his name to the early dynasty of the Merovingians. His son was Childéric. Childéric's son Clovis, a valiant, crafty, cruel, ambitious man, subdued what remnants of Roman provinces remained to the north of the Loire and the Marne. He then turned eastward and fought German tribes near Cologne. At this point a momentous incident took place. Clovis vowed that if he won the victory he would become a Christian. Christianity was, no doubt, a force, spiritual or political, for an ambitious king to reckon with. He had thought a good deal about it. His father Childéric had spared the lives of prisoners at the intercession of Sainte Geneviève. He himself had married a Christian princess, his first two children had been baptized, and he was on friendly terms with Saint Remi, bishop of Reims. The vow was heard. Clovis won a great victory, and in the cathedral church of Reims, on Christmas Day, 496, he was received into the Roman Catholic communion. Three thousand of his warriors followed his example.

Saint Hilaire, as I have said, had kept Gaul orthodox. The other Teutonic invaders — Visigoths, Ostrogoths,

Burgundians, Vandals — were Arian heretics, and at serious odds with the Gallo-Roman subject population. The Franks, by their orthodoxy, held out their hands to the Roman Church, and the two powers, bound by the bond of a common religion and the common interests that sprang therefrom, became allies, and side by side wrought together, in the course of the next two centuries, a work of the greatest consequence to European history. The immediate effect of the conversion was to constitute Clovis the hope of the orthodox populations subject to the heretical Visigoths and Burgundians. Clovis took advantage of this situation. He attacked Burgundy and reduced it to the position of a humble ally. Then, with the help of Burgundy, he defeated the Visigoths and took from them all the land between the Loire and the Pyrenees. He still recognized, so great was the force of Roman imperial tradition, the nominal suzerainty of the emperors at Constantinople, but his successors dropped this fiction, and proclaimed themselves independent kings of what we may now call France.

The story of the Merovingian dynasty from the death of Clovis (511) to its snuffing out by Pépin d'Héristal (754) presents little to warrant a halt in our rapid flight down these early centuries. There were wars with the Visigoths to the south, with the Bretons in the northwest corner, and with Germans across the Rhine. Under Clotaire I (*d.* 561) the Frankish dominions included all Gaul and extended eastward to the Weser and the Danube; even German tribes farther away recognized Frankish supremacy. Perhaps I should also name King Dagobert (629-638), for under Dagobert the Merovingian power reached its height. He was an able, brutal man, *avide de femmes, avide d'argent*, known to lovers of art from the golden ornaments fashioned by his treasurer

and goldsmith, Saint Éloi, bishop of Noyon, but more generally remembered by the couplet of uncertain historical value,

*Le bon roi Dagobert  
Mettait ses culottes à l'envers.*

These kings adopted the habit of dividing their dominions on their death, bequeathing the several parts to their sons in severalty — Austrasia to the east, with Metz for its capital, to one, Neustria to the west to another, and Burgundy to a third; and that led to wars between brothers, to confusion and anarchy. The nobles took advantage of this situation to wrench away from the king domains and privileges, or to exact them as the price of loyalty. The consequence was that they became a power equal to the crown, and so prepared the way for the overthrow of the Merovingian dynasty.

Among the great officials that surrounded the person of the monarch, the mayor of the palace, originally a sort of major-domo, rose to the foremost place. He became what one might call a chancellor, or prime minister, or grand vizier. It happened that the crown or crowns often devolved upon young infants, and during long minorities the mayor of the palace, acting with and taking advantage of the queen mother, became the virtual ruler. In Austrasia, then a separate kingdom, Pépin de Landen (*d.* 639), mayor of the palace, exercised royal power. His daughter's son, Pépin d'Héristal (*d.* 714), did the like. This Pépin, so it is said, was also descended from a distinguished Roman ecclesiastical family; he therefore represented the two political powers in the State, the nobility and the Church. We may regard him as the founder of the Carolingian family. He got into his hands the other divisions of the Frankish kingdom,

Neustria and Burgundy, and on his death was succeeded by Charles Martel, who was virtually king of the whole, for the Merovingian royalties — Clotaires, Thierry, Childéric, and Childéric, *les rois fainéants* — had sunk into apathy and oblivion, where we may leave them, with a hint to the reader that he may learn a great deal concerning Merovingian social life in the books of Gregory of Tours (538–594).

Our story has now reached a new period. In place of the Merovingians, the Carolingians occupy the front of the stage, and arrange it to suit themselves. By this time the various nations or races that had met in this region between the Atlantic and the Rhine, the English Channel and the Pyrenees, — aborigines, Iberians, Ligurians, Celts, Latins, Franks, — are well started on the road to becoming a homogeneous people, with the important qualifications that in different regions the intermingling is in different proportions (for instance, the Celts remain virtually pure in Brittany, and the Basques absolutely so in the southwest corner) and that the last comers, as nation overlaid nation, remained on top and constituted first a military aristocracy and then a dominant class. On the whole, however, these peoples have interbred, and their children partake of their respective qualities; they have adopted a common religion, the orthodox Roman Catholic creed; and though the Frankish nobles continue to speak *francique*, and officials and churchmen Latin, the mass of the people speak a *roman*, in which scarce thirty words of Celtic origin remain, relating to the soil or to industry, for which Latin lacked exact equivalents, and such Teutonic words as were kept took on a changed aspect — for example, *werra* (war) becoming *guerre*. So, though the complete union will still require several centuries, we may now, without a too

far-reaching anticipation of the future, think of this people that occupy Gaul as merely needing the ripening hand of time to become the French nation.

With such a people behind him, Charles Martel, son to Pépin d'Héristal, was able to indulge his natural joy in battle. His most famous achievement is his victory over the Saracens at Poitiers (732). The invaders had swept up from the Straits of Gibraltar through Spain like a prairie fire, had crossed the Pyrenees, and were galloping northward with the impetuosity of assured victory. The issue whether Europe should be Christian or Moslem seemed to hang in the balance. The Frankish battle array stood "like an immovable wall of ice." And though the southern provinces were not free from incursions, there was no more grave danger from the Saracens. Charles Martel also fought a great many battles in order to reduce rebels all over his wide domains to obedience. He was succeeded by his sons, Pépin le Bref and Carloman, but the latter soon became a monk and left his brother to pursue a brilliant political career alone.

Pépin le Bref followed the Frankish policy of a close alliance with the Roman Church. That church was the guardian of ancient civilization, and the wiser Barbarians perceived that their peoples must adopt that civilization or go under in the general mêlée of Barbarian strife; she possessed an elaborate organization of parishes and dioceses, managed by an ordered hierarchy, and the Frankish kings understood that such an organization would help hold together their loosely knit dominions; besides, she regarded the Arian Barbarians as enemies, and these same Arians were also enemies of the Franks. The Papacy, on its side, was eager for Frankish help. It was in a difficult situation. The popes had acquired their power in Italy after the emperors had withdrawn to



Constantinople, and by virtue of the immense prestige of Rome had asserted authority over other bishops, but they were not at ease. The Lombards, who were Arians, were threatening to sweep down on Saint Peter's Patrimony, and the Byzantine emperors were not strong enough to defend them, and, if they had been, they would merely have come to reassert their authority over the popes, who were certainly their subjects. Besides, the Greek Church had followed the Mohammedans in refusing to worship graven images, and had quarreled with Rome, which clung to images, if not for worship, at least for veneration. The Papacy's only hope of help against the Lombards lay in the Franks. Charles Martel, however, had not wished to quarrel with the Lombards. Pépin le Bref lent a more willing ear, and an understanding between him and the Pope was reached. Pépin was to conquer the Lombards and assure to the Papacy a secure dominion in central Italy; the Pope, in return, was to crown Pépin as king of the Franks. So it was done, and the last of the Merovingians was clapped into a monastery.

Pépin le Bref died in 770, and was succeeded by his son, the mighty Charlemagne, the greatest figure in political history between Julius Cæsar and Napoleon. His military operations were unceasing. He conquered the Saxons after fierce struggles and imposed Christianity upon them. He took up Charles Martel's legacy of war with the Saracens of Spain, crossed the Pyrenees, and advanced as far as Saragossa. He was stopped here by stout resistance, and before he had time to try conclusions to the end he was obliged to return; news came, it is usually said, of a Saxon revolt. Then began the famous retreat past Pamplona, through the pass of Roncevaux, over the Val Carlos toward what is now St.-Jean-Pied-de-Port. Charlemagne and the main body passed in safety,

but when the rear guard, bringing the baggage, passed up from the narrow valley of Roncevaux into the defiles, robber Basques burst out from their ambush, hurled down rocks and stones, overwhelmed the Franks, and carried off the booty. Many gallant soldiers were killed, chief among them Roland, Count of the Breton Mark. It was impossible to chastise the assailants, for they scattered and hid in the woods. The famous rear guard, however, has had its revenge, for its heroes, Roland, Oliver, Bishop Turpin, and others, live in epical immortality in the *Chanson de Roland*. Here we come upon the first great achievement of French genius.

From the hard little seed of a recorded military disaster, three centuries later, sprang this austere and noble epic of honor and valor. The poet touches facts with his magic wand as he pleases. Charlemagne has gone ahead, leaving Roland in command of the rear guard, which marches into the pass of Roncevaux:

*Haut sont li pui, et li val tenebros,  
Les roches bises, li destreit merveillous.*

High are the hills, the valleys tenebrous,  
The rocks are dark, the defiles sinister.

There the Saracens come on in countless multitudes.

*Dist Oliviers: "Paiien ont grant esforz,  
De noz Franceis m'i sembleit avoir molt poi!  
Compaign Rollanz, car sonez vostre corn!"*

Said Oliver: "Paynims are in great force,  
Of our Franks, meseems, there are but very few!  
Comrade Roland, blow your horn!"

"Please God," Roland answered, "my kith and kin shall not take shame for me, nor shall fair France into dishonor fall. . . . Please God, no living man shall say

I blew my horn for fear of heathen." The fierce battle begins; Roland, on his charger Veillantif, his good sword Durendal in his hand, fights like a lion. Oliver wields his sword Halteclere, and all the Frankish warriors, crying "*Monjoie!*" lay on load. Of the hundred thousand Saracens only two escape. But fresh armies of the enemy arrive. Again the Franks prevail. A third host comes on. But few Franks are left; at last Roland proposes to sound his horn, but Oliver now protests, and vows that, if Roland does, his sister Alde the Fair shall never marry him. At this, Archbishop Turpin interferes to say that Charlemagne could not arrive in time to save their lives, but would give them Christian burial. Roland sounds his olifant, and they fight on. Thousands upon thousands of Saracen swine perish, and the last few Franks die one by one. Oliver is killed, Turpin too, and Roland left alive alone, and on foot, for his horse with thirty wounds has fallen under him; but the last Paynims fly.

*Ço sent Rollanz que la mort li est près;*

Now Roland feels that death is nigh to him,

and, rather than let Durendal fall into heathen hands, he decides to break it. Putting forth all his strength, he smites a rock with it; he shatters the rock, but the blade is neither dented nor hurt. So he lays him down under a great pine tree, with his sword and his olifant, his face toward the foe, and says his prayers:—

*"Deus! meie colpe vers les toës vertuz  
De mes pechiez, des granz et des menuz,  
Que jo ai fait des l'hore que nez fui  
Tresqu'a cest jorn que ci sui conseüz!"  
Son destre guant en at vers Deu tendut;  
Angele del ciel i descendent a lui.*

“O God, forgive my sins before Thy righteousness,  
Both big and small, that from my day of birth  
I have committed up till this day now come.”  
His right glove he held up toward God;  
And angels from Heaven descended to him.

So Roland died, and “God sent down His cherubim, and Saint Michael of the Peril; and Saint Gabriel joined them, and they bore the Count’s soul to Paradise.”

To return to prose, the Franks in course of time recrossed the Pyrenees to the east and established their dominion, under the name of the Spanish Mark, between the Pyrenees and the river Ebro, and it endured for several generations, and laid a basis for long-remembered claims.

### III

## FROM CHARLEMAGNE TO HUGUES CAPET

CHARLEMAGNE belongs rather to European history than to French history, and so I shall be brief as to his doings. He certainly may be claimed by the French as a national hero, although he was a Teuton, for Teutons, as well as Latins and Celts, were among the component strains that made the French nation; but the Germans have a right to claim him, too. Of all his notable deeds, those performed in Italy produced the most significant and far-reaching effects. The Lombards failed to respect their grant to the Papacy made under Pépin's compulsion. The Pope appealed to Charlemagne, who marched down across the Alps, despoiled the Lombards of their kingdom, put their iron crown upon his own head, and confirmed his father's grant. The exact nature of this Carlovingian grant to the Papacy is not free from doubt; the popes always asserted it to be an absolute conveyance of sovereignty, but it seems likely that Charlemagne regarded the provinces in question, though belonging in certain ways to the Papacy, as under his sovereignty and as part of his Empire.

The final act in this sequence of dealings between the Frankish kings and the popes, which had begun with the baptism and coronation of Clovis at Reims, took place at Rome, on Christmas Day in the year 800, in the basilica of Saint Peter's. The Pope put an imperial crown upon Charlemagne's head and proclaimed him Emperor of the Romans. This ceremony was a fitting symbol to signify the work that Frankish chiefs and Roman pontiffs



were laying their hands to — the revival of Roman civilization by means of the reëstablishment of the Roman Empire. The Byzantine emperors were ignored; they dwelt afar, they did not speak the Latin tongue, they had wandered off into heresy and schism, and had rendered themselves impossible by vice and crime. Here, in the western provinces of the ancient Empire, Italy, Gaul, and Spain, with Germany conquered and Christian, stood, after centuries of confusion, a great Empire, whose emperor was the heir, in all but name, to the Latin dominions of the Cæsars; and it seemed good to the Pope, not unmindful of the advantages that might accrue to a Papacy which called an empire back to life, that the name should follow the power. So began, for good and for evil, by the alliance between Frankish monarchs and Roman priests, the Holy Roman Empire that endured for a thousand years, until an emperor even greater than Charlemagne snuffed it out.

Brilliant as were these achievements, Charlemagne's administration of his great Empire was equally memorable. He strove to introduce and maintain the greatest possible measure of order, law, morality, and religion. If he held up as a model before his eyes the ancient Roman Empire, he did so with all the modifications necessitated by the immense difference of circumstances. Great as were his abilities, great as was his ambition, his greater common sense never suffered him to hurry too fast or to be impatient with the unripeness of his people. He did what he could with the materials at hand. On the secular side he made use of the relations that were beginning to form between lords and vassals, relations of fealty on the one hand and of protection on the other, between the grantor of lands and the grantee who pledged himself to service in return for the use of the land — relations that were destined to

become more formal, more fixed, in later generations under the name of the feudal system; and these he encouraged and developed until they constituted a relatively stable military and economic organization. The formula of fealty was this: "Everybody knows that I have no means to feed or clothe myself. I ask you please to take me under your protection, upon condition that you will provide me with food and clothes in return for such services as I can render, and all my life I will obey and serve you as a free man, and I shall have no right to withdraw from under your authority." So, from the monarch down, but only among free men, this institution of reciprocal duties was established. Military service, of course, was the subordinate's principal duty.

Charlemagne's Empire was divided into counties, each under the government of a count; and the counts appointed officials with various duties to administer the subdivisions of the county. The ecclesiastical system was very similar, under archbishops, bishops, and priests. The King was at the head of all; he appointed counts and bishops, and, in order to keep as personal a superintendence as possible, he portioned the Empire into districts, and every year sent at least two envoys, one a layman, the other a churchman, to traverse the district assigned to them, find out what the inhabitants needed, look after the royal domain, bridges, and roads, superintend the administration of justice, punish culpable officials, take note of the morals of the clergy, listen to grievances, and so forth. They were the King's personal representatives, and reported to him. The King also issued capitularies, that is ordinances, expressions of his pleasure on various matters, sometimes general rules, sometimes instructions to his envoys or answers to questions from dubious officials; these, taken together with decrees of

church councils, made a considerable body of law, and after Charlemagne's death were gathered up into books, a sort of code, imperfect, but definite as far as it went.

Charlemagne's great glory is that he made war, not for the sake of conquest or personal aggrandizement, but in order to spread civilization; and in those days civilization necessarily connoted Christianity. He fought the Saxons to wipe out paganism, he fought the Saracens to drive back Islam; both at home and abroad he stood forth as the champion and representative of Latin Christendom. He sent ambassadors to the Caliph Haroun-al-Raschid to confer with regard to the Holy Places in Palestine; the Caliph presented him with the keys of the Holy Sepulchre and with the banner of Jerusalem, and asked him to make known his wishes upon local Christian matters. Charlemagne established a hospice for pilgrims at Jerusalem, a library, and a market. So began the idea of a French protectorate over the Holy Places.

At home he was most solicitous for the condition of the clergy, and regarded their moral and spiritual welfare as matters within his particular charge. "The King," the bishop of Orléans said, "has no mind to learn anything at all of us, but much rather to make us learn, and to raise the lazy from their torpor; he has got into the habit of setting prelates to a study of Holy Writ, the clergy to a love of discipline, philosophers to poring over things divine and human, and monks to meditation upon their rule." He encouraged scholars to work at a satisfactory text of the Vulgate, he busied himself over a revisal and expansion of the liturgy, he made sure that priests should observe the proper practice as to baptism, by ordering them all to write out what they did at that ceremony, and he himself read their reports. For him there was no division between religion and the other

interests of a man's life; and he felt himself responsible for both souls and bodies of his subjects.

Charlemagne also concerned himself with general culture. His energy and interests reached out on all sides. He could speak Latin; he understood Greek. He had a German grammar composed, and bade students collect German poetry, such as there was, or poetical traditions. He took an interest in astronomy, and enjoyed music. He fostered scholars, bringing them from foreign lands to his capital, Aix-la-Chapelle — Alcuin from York, Paul the Deacon from Italy, Paul the Grammarian from Pisa, Éginhard, his biographer, and others, now for the most part dim figures. Alcuin said to Charlemagne: "If we all imitated your fervor, a new Athens would arise in France, only more brilliant than that of old, a Christian Athens."

But this shining morning of a new day for Europe could not last. Such a renaissance, to continue, had need of a succession of Charlemagnes. After his death (814) his Empire cracked and crumbled, and in the following generations its separate parts rolled down into the confusion of the ninth and tenth centuries. Louis le Débonnaire succeeded to the whole Empire, for his brothers had died. He was the last person for the task laid upon him; diffident, gentle, full of self-distrust, a lover of cloistered walks and quiet places, he gave himself into the hands of ecclesiasts. Then began the little rifts and fissures in the great edifice that the genius of Charlemagne had set up. The clergy, free from the curb, talked of their rights to freedom, asserted that the Church should be governed solely by churchmen; they began to dream of a theocracy, and forced the docile Emperor to do public penance, and at one time they went so far as to depose him. The ecclesiastical organization, instead of holding the State

together, was rending it asunder. The Emperor, for his part, helped the dismemberment by dividing the Empire into separate kingdoms for his sons. The consequence was that on his death his three sons — Lothaire, the nominal Emperor, and his two contentious brothers — divided the Empire into three parts, by the treaty of Verdun (843). It was there that we find the first record (the Strasbourg oaths) of the new languages, French and German. Louis was awarded the lands east of the Rhine, which were destined to become Germany, Charles the Bald those that lay west of the Scheldt, Meuse, Saône, and Rhone, that is, the greater part of future France, while Lothaire, with the title of Emperor and a nominal supremacy, received the long strip of land between the two, consisting of Lotharingia (Lorraine) and Provence, with Italy to boot.

Such an arrangement inevitably caused the two outside kingdoms to struggle for the long narrow lands between them. So it soon happened. Charles the Bald was succeeded by his son Louis the Stammerer, and he by his son Charles the Simple. The very epithets indicate the dwindling down of a great stock. We need not linger over shifts and changes of fortunes and boundaries. Charles the Fat, a Carolingian of the German branch, gathered up the divided Empire for a moment into his hands, but he was soon deposed, and the whole fell apart into separate states again. And with the fall of royal power the barons and seigneurs found their opportunity; they wrested powers, rights, and privileges from the feeble kings, they extended their lordship over the poverty-stricken freemen, and added villages, granges, farms, estates of one kind or another, to their domains. We are now in the black night of the ninth and tenth centuries.

In the meantime another evil had fallen upon the



unlucky country. In the south, along the Mediterranean coast, Saracens made raids; they sacked Marseilles, they sailed up the Rhone and captured Arles. Nevertheless, the Mediterranean coast was a peaceful and pleasant place compared to the other coasts. The Norsemen came down, Scandinavians and Danes, — Normans, as they came to be called, — and began an era of terror. By the middle of the ninth century they were plundering and pillaging all along the Atlantic and Channel coasts. They sailed up the Gironde and burned Bordeaux, up the Charente to Saintes, up the Loire and sacked Angers, Saumur, Tours, Blois, Orléans, up the Seine and captured Paris. They made a foray into Burgundy and destroyed the monastery of Vézelay. They raided Amiens, they raided Poitiers. The whole coast, all the dwellers along large rivers, all within reach of a day's journey from navigable waters, lived in daily fear. At a moment's notice the population of a village must rush out, driving its beasts, carrying its babies, dragging its children, and laden with the relics and treasures of the church and whatever personal effects were portable.

The consequence of this ever-present danger was to deliver the peasants into the hands of the feudal barons. There was no safety for them except huddled together at the foot of the baron's castle, to be girdled about with turreted walls and protected by the baron's men-at-arms. At a rumor of Norse invaders the wretched cultivators of the soil hurried to swear fealty and save their skins. The poor man's lot was pitiful. Great stretches of the countryside, its villages burned, its bridges destroyed, its roads neglected, returned to wilderness. And yet by these evils the barons profited. Their vassals and serfs increased in numbers, their estates and baronies were enlarged, even their revenues were added to, till some among them

gathered several counties into their hands, became great feudatories, and cut deep into royal authority.

The feeble Carolingians, unable to repel the Normans by force, had recourse to subsidies. But the payment of blackmail is poor policy. The Normans demanded more and more. At last it was proposed to give them a place to settle in, a home to defend from other pirates; but on condition, as the Carolingians very rightly insisted, that they should become Christians. The Normans held back, but a victory of Charles the Simple over Duke Rollo proved a persuasive argument, and they submitted to baptism and settled between the lower reaches of the Seine and the Channel, thereby founding the duchy of Normandy (911).

This incorporation of the Normans is the last feat of the Carolingian dynasty that I shall chronicle; that dynasty has now said its say upon the world's stage. On the death of Charles the Fat in 888, confusion stalked abroad. The east division of the old Empire endeavored to lay claim to the whole. For nearly a hundred years it was uncertain whether France, torn by the Norsemen, would be dependent upon Germany or not. In the midst of all this turmoil and muddle the House of Capet appears upon the horizon. A member of this House, Robert le Fort, comte de Tours, appears as the only man able to withstand the Normans, and on the death of Charles the Fat his son Eudes, comte de Paris, was elected King of France by an assemblage of nobles, in disregard of whatever Carolingian rights of inheritance there were. But the Carolingians had not thrown up the sponge, and for several generations there was rivalry for the crown between the two families.

Finally, in 987, the Carolingian family virtually came to an end, and a great council of nobles and bishops met

together to choose a successor. The Archbishop of Reims rose up and said: "We must find someone to take the dead King's place in the kingdom, unless we are willing that the State, deprived of its head, and left to itself, should fall in ruins." And he nominated Hugues Capet. "Royalty," he continued, "does not pass by hereditary right; the man distinguished not only by noble birth, but also by intelligence and wisdom, should be lifted high." So Hugues Capet was duly crowned by the Archbishop, and a new dynasty sat on the throne of France.

## IV

### A ROLL CALL OF THE PROVINCES

WITH the accession of the Capets France enters into the feudal stage of society. The lord lives in his castle with its keep and moat; he lodges his kinsmen and men-at-arms within its walls. His artisans and farmers live in huts, huddled together, hard by. Serfs till his land and fetch him the produce, while his free tenants pay in kind. The lord exercises jurisdiction over all cases, civil or criminal, except where his overlord or the Church steps in; his bailiffs see to it that his subjects perform their feudal tasks and pay their feudal dues. All able-bodied men follow their lord's banner on a foray, or man the castle wall in case of attack. Above the lower order of barons stand the great feudatories — dukes, counts, bishops, perhaps, or abbots; and over all, in theory, the king. All that can be said in favor of the feudal system, which was more fully developed in France than elsewhere, is that it was better than more complete anarchy; it abounded in tyranny and injustice, and contributed a widow's mite of peace and security.

As I say, the king was in theory the roof and crown of the feudal structure; but, in fact, he had little preëminence over the great feudatories except by his title, and his time was spent in constant warfare with them. For six hundred years the domestic history of France consists in the struggle of the king to establish the royal authority throughout the land. This story during the eleventh and twelfth centuries is dull enough. I shall make little ado in passing lightly over the reigns of Robert II

(996-1031), Henri I (1031-1060), Philippe I (1060-1108), and Louis VI (1108-1137), surnamed *le Gros*, on account of his fatness, and give what space I can to the doings that have contributed to the spiritual and intellectual development of France. And I had best do this by speaking separately of the provinces into which France was divided.

Out of the confusion of the tenth century, out of the medley of fiefs, the great provinces of France, however shifting their contours, begin to show traits that still, even to-day, in spite of the political and intellectual domination of Paris, bestow upon them so great an individual interest and charm. The northeastern boundary of France should be, according to the more extreme nationalists, the river Rhine from Alps to the North Sea. That political dream has not been achieved. The northeast boundary to-day falls considerably short of the Rhine, and in those days all the eastern boundaries of France fell far short of what they are now; they did not extend to the Rhone, barely to the Saône, and not even to the upper waters of the Meuse; for Lothaire's middle kingdom had been virtually incorporated in the Holy Roman Empire — Lorraine, Alsace, Franche-Comté, part of Burgundy, as well as Dauphiné and Provence. It was still to be a long cry before France should extend to the Alps.

Of the chief provinces I will call the roll in rough and ready fashion, pausing to speak of their respective achievements, in architecture, in conquest, in literature, or religion, so that the reader may get some idea of the manifold life in France during these generations. To the north, at the top of the map, lay Picardie (though it did not get its name till later), Artois, and Flanders, the last overstepping what is now the Belgian boundary. Picardie, watered by the Somme and the Oise, in whose valleys



game abounds and in whose waters fish, with its dunes near the coast, its peat bogs, and its softly rolling lands, lies flat, except for the long range of little hills that run from near Arras northward to the sea, while nearer Boulogne fields and woods and little brooks, willow trees, hawthorn and holly, make so pleasantly peaceful a landscape that the traveler doubts if Michelet be right when, speaking of *la colérique Picardie*, he asserts that it has *du vin dans le cœur*. Artois contained Arras and Lens. Farther to the east, the county of Flanders, which in those days included Bruges and Ghent, lay flat and alluvial, a land rich and fertile, fit for raising horses and cattle, as well as people *gros et grossier*.

West of Picardie on the coast came the duchy of Normandy, with its memorable cities, Évreux, Bayeux, Caen, and Coutances. Normandy, in places, looks like southern England, but it presents very different aspects on the Channel and inland, also to the east and to the west. There are downs and moist verdant meadows, — hot-houses for horses and cattle, — there are long narrow valleys clothed with beech trees, great fertile plateaux, and, in the region near Maine, wooded hills, ravines, cascades, a savage mountainous country in miniature. On the whole, it has a general air of bucolic and verdurous opulence, as of peasants comforted with apples, reminding one in allegory of Raphael's buxom Fornarina. But the coast is its greatest finery; in some places it is indented and islanded, in others great chalk cliffs, at one point four hundred feet high, rise sheer above the sea, and near Étretat there are promontories and fantastic rocks, fit subjects for Breton poets. Here the Norsemen, by intermarriage with the native women during several generations, had become Frenchmen, though the ducal line from Guillaume Longue-Épée to Robert le Diable, and for the most

part the whole race, kept the high stature, fair hair, blue eyes, and blond complexion of their Nordic ancestry. Little need to speak of Normandy — the whole world knows its history. Its energy, its restless ambition, its love of strife and domination, built itself monarchies for monuments. William the Bastard, laying claim to the crown of England, gathered together fifteen hundred sail, and a motley army from the regions roundabout, at Saint-Valery-sur-Somme, crossed the Channel, and defeated Harold at Hastings (October 13, 1066), — you may still read the story in Matilda's tapestries at Bayeux, — and soon most of the fiefs and bishoprics of England were in Norman hands. Far across Europe, in southern Italy and Sicily, the sons of Tancred of Hauteville (near Coutances) — Guillaume Bras-de-Fer, Robert Guiscard, Roger the Great Count — set up another kingdom, and made Palermo the most civilized city in Europe. The Capella Palatina at Palermo and the cathedral at Cefalù bear eloquent witness to a love of beauty and a deep piety in these hard-hitting Normans.

Normandy itself contributes for an understanding of this period its city of Caen, which Henry Adams calls a Romanesque Mecca, with its Abbaye-aux-Dames and its Abbaye-aux-Hommes. Queen Matilda built the first to appease a Deity, indignant that consanguinity with her husband had not before marriage received canonical dispensation, and Duke William built the Abbaye-aux-Hommes. These noble churches, in their round-arched dignity and austere stateliness, bear witness to a Puritanical religion, inculcating duty and great deeds, whereas the religion of love and self-abandonment was to express itself later, and in other forms. Aucassin and Nicolette would have chosen the Capella Palatina, rather than these, in which to render thanks for their happiness;

these are more in tune with Roland and Oliver and the paladins that died at Roncevaux. In the Abbey of Jumièges (1040-1067) the great towers testify to the *Wanderlust* of the Norman as well as to his stalwart solidity, for their form incorporates memories of the pharos at Alexandria. At the western extremity of Normandy, on its rocky pinnacle, stands the Abbey of Saint-Michel de la Mer del Peril, the great archangel who descended at God's behest to the pass of Roncevaux to fetch the soul of Roland. William the Conqueror's grandfather began the church in 1020; but it was not finished for a hundred years, and now only nave and the transept remain to testify to quiet strength and religious certitude. More is not necessary; the seagirt promontory tells its own tale. Nothing could better typify the nobleness of the Norman soul, with its high aspiring courage and disdain of baseness.

In the northwest, jutting out between the English Channel and the Atlantic Ocean, lay Brittany, where the Celts, a dreamy, imaginative, emotional people, pushed into the corner, maintained their own Celtic language, their traditional beliefs and old habits, brooded over magic and mystery, fished in the deep or went seafaring, to come back to their firesides and hear their bards chaunt stories of King Arthur's knights, of Tristram and Iseult, of Lancelot and Guinevere, and of the Holy Grail. The interior of the country has a melancholy monotony, gilded and glorified by great sweeps of gold-flowered broom, and has also desert places, followed by spots of enchantment, but the coast is the glory of Brittany; if it gets its melancholy from inland, it gets its poetry from the shore, where the Atlantic rages, dashing waves, forty, sixty, eighty feet high, against the beetling and fissured cliffs.

South of Normandy the county of Anjou, home of the glorious Plantagenets, at that time of ampler dimensions

than later, lay along the Loire, a much-wooded region, with limpid rivers and rivulets, which flowed gently through a land plenteously endued with heavenly gifts. There were sheltered valleys, carpeted with lush grasses, fields of grain, slopes beautified by vineyards, and in places those strange cliffs of chalk which men hollowed out for habitation — valley of the Cher, valley of the Indre, valley of the Vienne, with the forêt de Chinon, the forêt de Fontevrault, the forêt de Château-la-Vallière (in those days, for a time, Anjou included Touraine), the bois de Gâtine, where Ronsard was to lounge and write verses:

*Couché sous tes ombrages vers  
Gâtine, je te chante,*

and so on. It was a mere county, but its counts grew to such great estate that they nearly plucked the crown of France from the brow of the Capets. Geoffroi Plantagenet married Matilda, daughter of Henry I of England, granddaughter of William the Conqueror, and their son Henry, an able, energetic, ambitious man, became Henry II of England, lord of Normandy, Brittany, and Anjou, and he married Eleanor of Aquitaine, whom the French king, Louis VII (1119-1180), had most foolishly divorced, and became lord of Poitou, Auvergne, Guyenne, and Gascony, and thereby master of regions on the continent far broader than those belonging to the king of France. Fortunately for the Capets, the children of Henry II inherited the turbulent qualities of their race, and fell to fighting with their father. Richard Cœur de Lion went on a crusade to the Holy Land (1189-1191), and on his way back was imprisoned by the Duke of Austria for several years, and then on his return went to fighting in France, built the Château Gaillard on the banks of the Seine, and was killed in an assault upon a castle in the Limousin

(1199). Of his brother, John Lackland, more hereafter. We must remember that these kings, whom Walter Scott has accustomed us to think of as Englishmen, were purely French, speaking French, and in no wise distinguishable, except by their talents and passions, from other Frenchmen.

Aquitaine, which the Princess Eleanor first carried as dowry to Louis VII of France, and, when he was so impolitic as to divorce her, to Henry Plantagenet, was, as I have hinted, an agglomeration of provinces, — Poitou, Saintonge, the Limousin, Angoumois, Guyenne, and Gascony, — but the names change with the centuries, sometimes with the decades. The country between the Loire and the Gironde is full of agreeable variety. Limousin has its dreary plateau of Millevaches (the prolific source of rivers with three watersheds), its fair rounded hills, its mountains toward Auvergne, its chestnut forests. La Vendée shows steep valleys approached by undulating plains, and there the black waters of the Sèvre roll through their rocky banks. Off La Rochelle lie the islands Île de Ré and the Île d'Oléron. To Guyenne and Gascony I shall come back later. For the moment I will only refer to Aquitaine's achievements in Romanesque architecture, that style of ecclesiastical building that prevailed from the end of the tenth century till past the middle of the twelfth. Building during the Merovingian period had been but a degenerate mode of Roman work, and during the Carolingian period had followed Byzantine influence. Romanesque architecture is claimed to be the first important manifestation of the artistic genius of France; and, at the same time, nothing shows better the lack of national unity than the diversities of Romanesque architecture in these different provinces.

In Périgueux, the capital of Périgord, the cathedral of



Saint-Front has a marked peculiarity : the square divisions of the cross-shaped edifice are crowned with cupolas, very much after the plan of San Marco in Venice, and it is usually thought that the style was brought from there. At any rate, the prestige of Saint-Front served to make it a model for churches roundabout — in Saintonge, in Angoumois, in Limousin, and in Guyenne. In Poitou, which borders the Atlantic and lies between Anjou and Angoumois, there is quite a difference. There are no cupolas, the façades of the churches are lavishly ornamented, the portals lack tympanums, the towers mount square for one or two stories and end in a conical pyramid, while in the interior the aisles, without galleries, rise uninterrupted to buttress the vault of the nave. Notre-Dame-la-Grande at Poitiers, with its much-arcaded façade, flanked by great grouped pillars with little conical tops, has, in spite of various architectural transgressions, both a wayward and solemn beauty and a deep religious sentiment. Poitou and Angoumois, as you will guess from the sculptured façade of Notre-Dame-la-Grande, boast one of the three schools of Romanesque sculpture.

All the provinces have a marked individuality, as even their adjectives show : Normand, Breton, Angevin, Saintonguais, Limousin, Auvergnat, Toulousain, Provençal, Bourguignon, Tourangeau, Angoumois. Of them all, Auvergne, perhaps, is the most markedly individual. It has both mountains and plains, from Mont-Dore and the Puy-de-Dôme to the valley of the Allier. Of its plains, Apollinaris Sidonius, the last distinguished citizen under the Roman rule, said : "It is a sea of meadows in which, free of danger, the errant waves go billowing through the grain"; and of its mountains a more modern inhabitant says that "a philosophic spectator who climbs the summits will be ravished by the sight of what Nature

does both in moments of caprice and in paroxysms of convulsion." Its chief towns are Clermont-Ferrand, Riom, and Issoire, of which last it is reported:

*À Issoire bon vin à boire,  
Bon pain à manger et belles filles à voir.*

Clermont-Ferrand, whose situation (Chateaubriand says) is one of the most beautiful in the world, is famous because Urban II, a French pope, preached there the First Crusade — the redemption of Jerusalem by force. His hearers of northern speech cried out, "*Diex el volt*," and those from the south, "*Deu lo wolt*"; and so these enthusiastic souls set Europe charging full tilt at Asia, Christianity at Islam (1095). Perhaps even then the builders had laid the corner stone for Notre-Dame-du-Port, that charming little fantastic church where the chapels gather round the apse as fledglings under a hen, and the apse leans against the main edifice in the happiest union of grace and harmony, seeking in place of inert resistance an equilibrium of push and counterpush. It is said that these Auvergnat architects affected church building roundabout, even as far as the great church of Saint-Sernin at Toulouse.

To the northeast of Auvergne and west of the Saône lay Burgundy, a duchy that played as great a European rôle as Normandy, not by the power of the sword, but by that of the spirit. The abbey of Cluny, near Mâcon, has been called the "cradle of modern civilization." It was founded by Guillaume d'Aquitaine in 910, exempt from all authority, temporal or ecclesiastical, except that of the Pope, and for two hundred years it was a mighty force for good. It became the great mother abbey of Western Christendom, and founded provinces far and near, from Spain to Poland, from England to Italy. It was the support of Cluny that

enabled the great Hildebrand (Gregory VII) to raise the Papacy to its towering pride of place over Christendom. The noble abbey of Vézelay (1096-1104), beautiful as a swan with arched neck and ruffled feathers, in its aristocratic elegance of vault and column, and that of Tournus, are in Burgundy. Another of the three schools of Romanesque sculpture is the Burgundian. In the great tympanum at Vézelay (1120-1130?) the Christ has a strange mystic majesty that later sculptors never equaled. You will see plainly enough the Byzantine influence, which had come in through miniatures and carvings, in the hieratic rigidity of the figures, in the curls and swayings of the draperies, and in the deep solemnity of the execution. Cîteaux (1098), mother of the Cistercian order, is also in Burgundy.

From Cîteaux went forth a young man of genius, who sought to discipline by stern ascetic practices a will that was destined to move all Europe. He founded the abbey of Clairvaux, in Champagne, which in her turn sent forth between the years 1126 and 1153 sixty-five daughters of her own. Saint Bernard (1091-1153), a native of Burgundy, is the most remarkable man on the stage of French history since Charlemagne; all a mystic and all a practical reformer, he combined passionate beliefs with a power of practical accomplishment, like Saint Paul. His political achievements belong to the historic past of Europe, but hungry souls still listen to his words. He said: "Man, if you desire a noble and holy life, and unceasingly pray to God for it, and if you continue constant in this your desire, it will be granted to you without fail, even if only in the day and hour of your death; and if God should not give it to you then, you shall find it in Him in eternity; of this rest assured."

This brief reference to the contribution of Burgundy,

through her abbeys and through Saint Bernard, to the spiritual history of France must suffice; but I should add a word concerning the vineyards of Burgundy, which even in Roman times were as famous as those of Guyenne, and were not neglected by the mediæval monks. Even the stern Cistercians, whose Puritan taste banished ornaments from churches and took delight in bare austerity, cultivated the grapes. "The *vignerons* will see to it that unripe and rotten grapes, if such there be, and the grapes of the young vine-stocks, are left on the vines, as they must form no part of the wines of the *clos*, and the last day of the vintage will be employed in gathering those green and rotten grapes and the grapes of the young stocks, as well as any sound grapes which have previously escaped the eye of the vintagers." You see, not a grape was to be wasted, but the poor grapes were not to damage the reputation of the monastic vineyards. The grapes of Burgundy have had a long and honorable career.

I must be very brief with the remainder of my roll call. The county of Champagne lies east of Paris, with Troyes for its capital. The sparkling wine that has carried its fame around the world was not yet thought of; the county's reputation, apart from the sanctity attached to Reims, lay in poetry. The Princess Marie, daughter of Eleanor of Aquitaine and Louis VII, married Henri, comte de Champagne. Both ladies were fond of poetry; Eleanor had patronized the troubadour, Bernard de Ventadour, and Marie wrote verses which she dedicated to her mother's second husband, Henry Plantagenet. Ladies were given to reading poetry, and exercised a wholesome influence, for one poet boasts that you shall not find a single *mot de vilenie* in his poetry, and another *aucune parole laide ou blâmable*. The comtesse Marie, however, is chiefly distinguished as patroness of Chrétien

de Troyes, who flourished 1160-1180, and enjoys the reputation of the most considerable poet of the north at this time. Like his patroness the comtesse Marie, he followed the ways of Breton bards and dealt with Breton subjects, Lancelot conspicuous among them. I suspect that self-indulgent readers, unless mightily striving for a Ph.D., never disturb him.

In among these greater provinces, the royal domain, once the duchy of France (called for the most part the Île-de-France), looks slim and pitiful, but it included Paris and Orléans. How it made good its pretensions to rule over all France will be the subject of succeeding chapters. In the year 1152, after Henry Plantagenet had married Eleanor of Aquitaine, the fortunes of the French monarchy looked very low. But Louis VI (1108-1137), in spite of his fatness, was a superior man, and his son Louis VII (1137-1180), though foolish enough to divorce Eleanor, had the benefit of a very wise counselor in the Abbé Suger, of whom more hereafter, and then came the very able Philippe Auguste (1180-1223).

So much for the provinces of the north, where the people spoke the *langue d'oïl*, but there remains the people of the *midi*, who lived south of a line drawn, say, from Bordeaux to Lyons, and spoke the *langue d'oc*, or Provençal, as we usually call it — a more sonorous language. These southerners were very different from the Frenchmen of the north, and they differed among themselves, partly because of different original stocks, and partly because of different influences, Gascony, Guyenne, Navarre, Foix, Languedoc, Provence, all more or less shifting in boundaries. The Gascons, to whom, it is said, *Dieu avait donné bouche magnifique*, have long had a high reputation for boasting. The vineyards of claret and sauterne have an equally high reputation; even in classical days Bordeaux wine was



famous, and the chief bond that held Guyenne and Gascony to England for so long was that between vintners and market. In the twelfth century Gascon wine sold in England at from three farthings to two pence a gallon, and claret continued cheap in London till southwestern France was lost. To the east of Gascony comes the county of Toulouse, — or, I had better say, Languedoc, for terms are shifting, — with the city of Toulouse itself, and its great Romanesque church Saint-Sernin, and Albi, Carcassonne, Montpellier, Narbonne, Béziers, and so forth.

Provence, within the limits of the Holy Roman Empire, lay between the Alps, the Mediterranean, and the river Rhone, bathed in light, swept by the mistral (a cold dry north wind), and looked southward to the sparkling sea and eastward to the jagged outline of the Alps — a land of contrasts between the Rhone valley, the flat seacoast, *la côte d'azur*, and the high masses of the mountains. The lowlands are sun-baked, but when you leave orange groves and lemons, the palm, the fig, olive trees, the mimosa and the aromatic rosemary, and mount the uplands, you come upon hills clothed with spruce and carpeted with lovely clumps of pale lavender, and attain cool altitudes, even in midsummer, and, as you go, according to the season you meet the flocks seeking the gray-green mountains for the summer or coming back in autumn. To-day we think of Provence as the land of Daudet and Frédéric Mistral, of Cézanne, of flowers, and of pleasure-loving visitors, but it is not modern at heart, it has never changed very much, and, though it was the earliest part of France to be christianized, underneath it has remained faithful to its old pagan heritage. You remember the colloquy between two of Daudet's peasants from different parishes, one of whom worshiped the Madonna, the other the Immaculate Virgin :



ROMAN AMPHITHEATRE AT ARLES



*Elle est jolie, ton Immaculée !*

*Va-t'en donc, avec ta bonne mère !*

*Elle en a vu de grises, la tienne, en Palestine !*

*Et la tienne, hou ! la laide . . . qui sait ce qu'elle  
n'a pas fait ? . . . Demande plutôt à Saint Joseph.*

She's a nice one, your Immaculate Virgin !

Go 'long with your old woman !

Your girl has seen some life in Palestine !

And yours, whoop ! Ugly old thing. . . . Who knows  
what she has n't done ? . . . Better ask Saint Joseph !

Paganism also lingers in piled stones ; the Maison carrée and the arena at Nîmes, the arena at Arles, the Pont du Gard, the triumphal arch at Orange, and other monuments, less well preserved, exercised a dominating pagan influence on Christian architecture, as you may see in the arches, columns, and entablature that adorn the façade of Saint-Gilles-du-Gard and in the portal of Saint-Trophime at Arles. Perhaps it was a consciousness of this fundamental paganism that impelled the Provençal poets, Roumanille, Mathieu, Aubanel, and other friends of Mistral, who founded an association (the *Félibrige*) for preserving their ancient tongue (1854), to write so many Christmas hymns, *Li Nouvè*, in celebration of the birth of Christ at Bethlehem.

And, indeed, what the *midi* of the Middle Ages has to offer of chief interest is this ancient tongue, *la langue d'oc*, with its various dialects, Auvergnat, Languedocien, Catalan, and Limousin. Of these the last became preëminent in the hands of the troubadours as the language of what we call Provençal poetry.

But I have come to the end of my chapter, of which the purpose is to enable the reader to understand the strength of the centrifugal forces at work, and how hard the task of consolidation that lay before the monarchy.

## V

### THE TWELFTH CENTURY

THE reigns of Philippe I (1060-1108) and of Louis le Gros (1108-1137) are best remembered as the period in which Romanesque architecture flourished, and the differences of that architecture in the various provinces gave evidence concerning the difficulty that confronted the Capetians in bringing all France under a centralized monarchy. With the next kings, Louis VII (1137-1180) and Philippe Auguste (1180-1223), we pass into another period, characterized by a rich lyrical literature in the south, and in the north by a new form of architecture that constitutes one of the great glories of France. The impulses that wrought these brilliant effects germinated in the earlier period. But before I take up these two subjects, let me sketch an outline of political doings.

The foolish Louis VII took the cross at Vézelay and went upon Saint Bernard's crusade (1147-1149), which resulted in a complete fiasco. His second blunder was to divorce Eleanor of Aquitaine, who promptly married young Henry II of England. The betting on Plantagenet against Capet might have been cautiously booked at seven to one. Fortunately Henry's rebellious sons, Henry, Richard, and John, prevented any serious effort against France, and with the accession of Philippe Auguste (1180-1223) the tide turned and the French monarchy raised its drooping head.

This cool-headed, astute, deep-revolving king put his long reign of forty-three years to good advantage. Confronted with the turbulent and talented Plantagenets, he practised astuteness. He encouraged the sons in



rebellion against their father. When Richard Cœur de Lion succeeded to the throne, Philippe Auguste offered to go crusading with him, and the two went on the Third Crusade (1189-1192). Philippe Auguste slunk away as soon as he could, and was no stranger to Richard's imprisonment in Austria on his way back. After Richard had been ransomed, Philippe Auguste supported John against Richard; and when John became king, he supported first young Arthur against John and then the rebel barons of England. By taking advantage of the English rebellion, by intrigue, dexterous management, and military vigor, he reduced Normandy to subjection, and then recovered Brittany, Maine, Anjou, Touraine, and Poitou. King John put forth one last great effort; he made alliance with the Holy Roman Emperor, and induced him to invade France from the east while he himself should come down from the west. Philippe Auguste rose to the occasion; he defeated the German Emperor in the decisive battle of Bouvines (1214), which freed France from the Plantagenet danger and left her mistress of all the Plantagenet provinces except Guyenne and Gascony. Bouvines decided that there should be a kingdom of France. So much for politics.

Gothic architecture is a scientific development from Romanesque architecture, but it is more than that. The Romanesque architects took the ground plan of the Roman basilica, with its long nave and aisles, built out transepts, added the apse to make a cross, and then, after their timber roofs had been burned, substituted barrel vaults made of stone. A heavy roof required solid walls. It was an honest architecture that showed outside what it contained within, simple in its lines, and with sincerity in the round tops of its portals and windows and in the grave strength of its towers.

But though Cluny spread Romanesque architecture from Normandy to Spain, it also kindled a spiritual fire that was not content with horizontal lines, with arches and vaults, all downward bent, but raised its looks to commerce with the skies. Saint Bernard fed this spiritual fire, and sent faith soaring skyward. It is hardly fantastic to compare the contrast between his faith and Abélard's reason to that between the star-ypointing Gothic arch and the round-topped Romanesque.

The gifted Abélard (1079-1142) and Descartes have been coupled together as the two most gifted of French philosophers. Abélard possessed a subtle mind, great talents for speaking, and a passion for argument and controversy. It was a dangerous time; for philosophers disputed concerning the nature of thought and of things, whether ideas were things in themselves or were mental abstractions, and speculation inevitably turned to the subject of greatest interest, the nature of the Trinity, and ran into the danger of making the Three Persons separate and distinct, or else of confounding them in a vague pantheistic deity. In among these perils the brilliant Abélard lightly trod. His lecture hall in Paris was thronged with the intellectual best. The sad Héloïse sat at his feet. Abélard was too daring, and knocked against the barriers of orthodox belief. Old heresies, long anathematized and trodden underfoot, raised their horrid heads in his lectures — the Persons of the Trinity were declared not to be equal, the human nature of the Word was misinterpreted, subtle errors concerning the Redemption crept into his books like serpents. Saint Bernard was all for faith, absolute and unquestioning, and scorned reason, with its syllogisms builded up like blind walls, with windows too little to let in the light of Heaven's truth; he did not pause to weigh delicate logical subtleties, he felt in his passionate

heart that Abélard was subjecting faith to reason, and attacked "this sinuous viper, this new hydra, this persecutor of our faith." Saint Bernard triumphed. The Council of Sens, which King Louis VII himself attended, condemned the ardent philosopher (1140). Faith, unquestioning faith, triumphed; and this is virtually the date that Gothic architecture, the noblest form faith has ever put on, first shows itself.

The first period of Gothic architecture lasted all but a hundred years. Architects blended a mystic devotion to Our Lady, the Mother of God, with a scientific balance of thrust and buttress. Some say that the first manifestation of the new style was at Saint-Denis, but earlier traces have been found here and there in less important churches. This famous abbey, which had been built to commemorate the saint who walked carrying his severed head, which lodged royal bones, and whose banner, the oriflamme, Louis VI had adopted as the royal banner of France, had become too small to hold the crowds of worshipers, and the Abbé Suger decided to rebuild it. He employed pointed arches in the façade (1140), and braced the choir (1144) with Gothic buttresses. In the cathedral of Notre-Dame de Senlis, in the old parts similar features are to be seen. Notre-Dame de Chartres was begun in 1134, Notre-Dame de Noyon in 1150, Notre-Dame de Paris in 1160, Notre-Dame de Sens in 1168, Notre-Dame de Laon in 1174.

No one would deny the sense of Christian aspiration in Gothic architecture, the presence as it were of a divine passion lifting itself from earth and stretching its arms in love and longing toward its God. But these noble forms are primarily a consequence of adapting piles of stone to the exigence of physical laws. Under the Romanesque system, a vaulted roof of stone exerted a down-

ward and an outward thrust, which had to be met by solidity of wall. This required labor, material, and space. Gradually the great revolution took place. Take four piers, two on each side of a nave, *a* and *b* on the right, *c* and *d* on the left, unite *a* and its opposite pier, *c*, by a rounded arch, and *b* and *d* by another, and then throw diagonal arches from *a* to *d*, and from *b* to *c*, and you have a little framework for the bay of a nave, a skeleton to bear up the weight of the roof, by which the thrust of that weight is carried down these arches to the piers. This frame does the work that the solid vault did before. Following this method, the architect can then lighten his walls, and open great windows in them, for the work formerly done by the wall is transferred to the piers. By means of the pointed arch he can raise his vaults to great heights. To compensate for the loss of solidity of the mass, he must throw out supports, but they need be but segments of arches, flying buttresses, which carry the weight to outer piers, or to an outer wall. By transferring the weight of the roof from the general structure to the frame of ribs, piers, and flying buttresses, the revolution in style from the Romanesque to the Gothic was effected.

Soon the cathedrals that I have enumerated were followed by others, at Meaux, Bourges, Soissons, and elsewhere. Even in Burgundy, the very stronghold of Romanesque art, the monks adopted the ogival vault for the choir of the abbey church at Vézelay. And with the Gothic architecture—called Gothic by Raphael in derision, and by patriotic Frenchmen *le style français* rightly enough—came its accessories, sculpture and glass. The reader primarily interested in politics may note that all this great intellectual and religious effort was virtually the achievement of the Île-de-France, the royal domain,

and that will enable him to understand where Philippe Auguste got the power and energy that enabled him to ward off the Angevin peril.

During this early period of primitive Gothic, southern France was producing the poetry of the troubadours, the first considerable body of literature since the days of ancient Rome. The ideas that the troubadours expressed were few: the beauty of love and courtesy, the charm of ladies, the duty of service, and of making oneself a perfect knight, brave, accomplished, elegant, respectful, and true. These ideas were expressed in language of an artificial and highly conventional style, sometimes scarcely intelligible, so thick was the artifice, so far-fetched the phrases. But, now and again, this young poetry, like the first unfolding leaves in April, has a charm and a tenderness, and sometimes — at least so more credulous readers believe — expresses genuine love and admiration. Nevertheless, the restraints imposed by convention upon ideas, phrases, and words were indeed tyrannical, as appears even in the earliest of the poems that have come down to us. I will enumerate some of the more famous troubadours.

Guillaume IX, Duke of Aquitaine (1071-1127), has the reputation of being the earliest. He is said to have been superficial, sensual, and insincere. His granddaughter Eleanor, who first married Louis VII and then Henry Plantagenet, and her two daughters, Marie who married Henri of Champagne, and Alix who married Henri's brother Thibaut of Blois, carried a knowledge and liking for Provençal poetry to the north. Besides, the famous Bernard de Ventadour, of Limousin, followed Queen Eleanor northward. Some think him, at least according to modern taste, the greatest of the troubadours. For instance:



*Non es meravehla s'ieu chan  
 Miehls de nulh autre chantador,  
 Quar plus traï mos cors ves amor,  
 E miehls sui faitz a son coman.*

It is no wonder if I sing  
 Better than any other singer,  
 For my heart is more drawn towards love,  
 And I am better fitted for his commands.

And again :

*Quant erba vertz e fuelha par,  
 E'l flor brotonon per verjan,  
 E'l rossinhols autet e clar*

*Leva sa votz e mov son chan,  
 Joy ai de luy, e joy ai de la flor;  
 Joy ai de me, e de mi dons major.*

When green the grass and leaves appear,  
 And flowers are in the orchard budding,  
 And the nightingale shrill and clear

Lifts up her voice and tunes her song,  
 I have joy of her, and of the flower,  
 And of myself, and of my lady peerless.

Bernard de Ventadour was of humble origin, but Bertrand de Born was a nobleman of Périgord, always at war with all his neighbor barons, *totz temps ac guerra ab totz los siens vezins*. He also took part in the quarrels of the Plantagenets, fighting on the side of Prince Henry, the oldest son, against Richard Cœur de Lion, and then stirring the sons against their father, so that he has attained a dreadful immortality in Dante's *Inferno*; but in so doing he deserved well of the young French monarchy. Afterwards he made friends with King Richard, himself given to writing poetry, on whom he bestowed the epithet of

*Yea and Nay, oc e no*, to indicate his changes of mind. But devoted as he was to Richard, he did not follow him on the crusade because, as he says, "*J'ai vu ma belle et blonde dame, et j'ai perdu tout courage de partir.*" Later he seems to have been in attendance on Count Raymond V of Toulouse, and finally he died (1210), a Cistercian monk. God rest his soul.

Then there was Jaufre Rudel, lord of Blaye, a town on the Gironde, where now, and perhaps then, stretched the vineyards of Saint Émilion, who lived and died as a troubadour should. He fell in love with an *inconnue*, the Countess of Tripoli, in Palestine, and set sail over the Mediterranean to see her. The sort of poetry that he composed we know best from Rostand's *La Princesse Lointaine*:

*Car c'est chose suprême  
D'aimer sans qu'on vous aime,  
D'aimer toujours quand même,  
Sans cesse,  
D'une amour incertaine,  
Plus noble d'être vaine. . .  
Et j'aime la lointaine  
Princesse.*

For life contains one bliss supreme,  
To love although not loved again,  
And yet always to love the same,  
I ween,  
With a true love undefined,  
A nobler love because resigned —  
And I love her I cannot find,  
My Queen.

Jaufre Rudel reached Tripoli very ill. The princess came down to the ship, and he died in her arms, and was buried, they say, in the churchyard of the Knights Templars.

Marcabrun (*fl.* 1150–1195) of Gascony was famous in his day, and strange to say, although he sends a starling to commend him to his lady, he professed to be an enemy of Love, “who, without a sword, had murdered thousands of men, for God had created him a most terrible enchanter.” He was a friend of Jaufre Rudel, and dedicated a poem to him when Jaufre sailed away over the sea. Peire Vidal, of Toulouse, on the contrary, was all for love and admiration of womankind. He was the son of a *pelissier*, a cloak-maker. After various adventures of varying issues, he repaired to the court of Vicomte Barral, lord of Marseilles. The biographer continues: “One day when Peire Vidal knew that Lord Barral had gone out and had left his lady wife Azalais alone in her chamber asleep, he went in to the bedside, knelt down, and kissed her lips. She felt the kiss, and thought it had been her husband’s, but when she sat up and saw the madcap Peire Vidal she began to shriek and make a great noise. Her maids-in-waiting rushed in when they heard it and asked what the matter was. Peire Vidal ran away. The lady sent for Lord Barral and made great complaint of Peire Vidal because he had kissed her, and, weeping, begged him to take vengeance. Lord Barral, like a sensible man, tried to comfort her, and began to laugh and to chide her because she had made such a disturbance for what the madcap had done. But she continued to make a great fuss, and sent after him, uttering menaces. Peire Vidal was very much frightened, and took ship for Genoa, where he stayed till he could cross the sea to join King Richard [in the Holy Land]. His stay was long, and while in Genoa he composed many pretty roundelays to tell of the kiss that he had stolen.” Peire did not reach Palestine, but fell a victim to some whimsical madness and died in Cyprus, about the time that the more sentimental Jaufre Rudel died in Tripoli.

Arnaut Daniel, a nobleman of Ribérac in Périgord, was a contemporary, — *mot avinens hom e cortes*, a gentleman and good fellow, — and, though he is not rated high to-day, may snap his fingers at laborious scholars, for Petrarch said :

*Arnaldo Daniello,  
Gran maestro d'amor; ch' alla sua terra  
Ancor fa onor col suo dir nuovo e bello.*

Arnaut Daniel,  
Great master of love; who to his native land  
Still does honor with his new and beautiful poetry.

And Dante, speaking through his friend the poet Guido Guinicelli, says that Daniel surpassed all others in his *versi d'amore*, and in particular Giraut de Borneil, from Limousin, who belonged to the next generation, and was called by his contemporaries Master of Troubadours.

I need not enumerate more names; you will find the goodly fellowship set out in Raynouard's stout volumes. This Provençal literature, as one can see from its matter and its forms, grew up in a pleasure-loving land, where verses, flowers, tourneys, love-making, were the occupations of the leisure class, and, as pleasure-loving became predominant, religion and worship drifted to the background. No northern knight would have confessed that he stayed away from fighting God's enemies for love of a fair-haired girl. This laxity among the nobles was supplemented by various unorthodox movements. A sect founded by Peter Waldo (Pierre de Vaux) in Provence spread doctrines of poverty and ascetic practices; and other dissenters, the Cathari, brought in outlandish ideas that had drifted in from the far-off East, mystical, fantastic, superstitious, nonsensical, anti-ecclesiastical, often gross. Many dogmas of the Church were abandoned, and many

pious practices; priests were let alone; dues were not paid. The pleasure-loving nobles looked with sympathy on opinions and conduct that favored a lax morality and neglect of ecclesiastical obligations, until the counties of Toulouse and Languedoc — that is, all the region between Gascony and the Rhone — were tainted with this Albigensian heresy. Count Raymond VI, whose father was a great patron of troubadours, upheld and protected them.

The Church could not endure this. Christendom was fighting Islam, and there must be no defaulters or slackers at home. Jerusalem had been conquered by the Turks in 1187, and the crusade of 1189-1192, led by Philippe Auguste, Richard Cœur de Lion, and Frederick Barbarossa, had failed to recover it; that of 1202-1204 had failed more pitifully still. Christendom must hold together; heresy must be suppressed at home. The popes bent their efforts to bring the errant sheep back to the fold by peaceful means. The need was dire. One heretic said: "I would chop up the cross for kindling to boil the pot." It was too true: "Satan reigned in peace over the greater part of southern France." Papal emissaries from Italy, Saint Dominic from Castile, had no effect. A papal legate was murdered by a retainer of the Count of Toulouse. This outrage kindled the blaze. The Count was excommunicated, and all good men were called to take the cross and avenge the wrong done to Holy Mother Church. Fifty thousand crusaders from the north answered the call. Among them, Simon de Montfort, a petty baron from the Île-de-France, was the ablest, and before long became the leader. Again the Île-de-France supplied the energy that in the end redounded to the benefit of the French monarchy, and reestablished the unity of faith.



The crusaders captured the city of Béziers and massacred seven thousand persons. Simon de Montfort became vicomte of the city, and also of Carcassonne. It is unnecessary to tell of battles, sieges, massacres, and hideous cruelty in the name of religion. King Pedro of Aragon, who had rights in Languedoc, came to its rescue. But this gay, debauched cavalier was no match for the austere Puritan. Pedro lost the battle and his life (1213). The struggle went on from town to town, from castle to castle. Simon de Montfort was killed in an assault upon Toulouse (1218), and his son Amaury was not equal to carrying on his father's ambitions. The French crown stepped in, and under Louis VIII, successor to Philippe Auguste, laid hold of all this southland, and in due course, in one way or another, united it to the French crown. The effective conquest, however, was in the reign of Philippe Auguste; so that in that brilliant reign great provinces, north, west, and south, were added to the monarchy, and render it as illustrious politically as it is artistically through Provençal literature and the rise of Gothic architecture.

## VI

### THE REIGN OF SAINT LOUIS (1226-1270)

PHILIPPE AUGUSTE had broken the power of the Plantagenets in France and restored all the northwest to the French crown, and on his death left the kingdom at peace and prosperous. His son Louis VIII, who when Dauphin had been foolish enough to accept an invitation from the English barons and invade England, with the lame and impotent result that you may read in Shakespeare's play of *King John*, died after a reign of three years. His eldest son, Louis, was then but eleven, and his widow, Blanche of Castile, governed the kingdom as regent. Blanche was able and energetic; she completed the subjection of Languedoc to the crown, asserted the royal authority over various disobedient barons, and married Louis to Marguerite of Provence, not so much to secure his happiness as to lay the foundation for a claim to that province across the Rhone. Blanche, too, should have the credit of bringing up her son, who after Marcus Aurelius was perhaps the noblest man that ever sat upon a throne. Giotto, in his fresco in the Bardi chapel in Santa Croce, guessed well as to what he must have looked like.

Louis IX — Saint Louis, as he deserves to be called at once — reigned from 1236 to 1270. That such a man should be the keystone of the feudal arch in thirteenth-century France seems bewildering; but let us assume that we see in him the educating effect of Gothic architecture. There, not half a mile from the Louvre, where the architect Jean de Chelles was at work upon transepts

and apse, the nave of Notre-Dame was complete, and stood in austere grandeur. Here is no restless reaching for the sky; solid upon the ground, she retains that sense of union with mother earth that marked the Romanesque churches; her façade rises in regal state, storey upon storey, the horizontal courses repeating, line upon line, the verses of a sculptured psalm; first the portals, then the series of kings, next the great rose flanked by the lesser windows, above them the open gallery, and higher still the square towers, all singing in unison, "Bless ye the Lord." Mass, dignity, royalty, self-sufficiency, are here set forth in all their fullness. Just how far Jean de Chelles had proceeded with his constructions by this time, I don't know. Perhaps, even then, the apse and sides had been built, and the cathedral, with its flying buttresses, as if it were a winged thing folding its pinions, was very like what it is to-day, with stained glass, mullions, and tracery, with rose windows fit for Heaven, all so glorious that they make you forget that the whole is a mathematical triumph, the application of arithmetic, algebra, and geometry to the laws of physics. It cries out with the Parisian architect, Maître Mignot, "*L'art sans la science n'existe pas.*"

What an effect Notre-Dame de Paris must have exercised upon the sensitive spirit of the boy! His mother deepened this spiritual education, saying to him again and again that she had rather see him dead than commit a mortal sin. The seed fell on good soil. Young Louis heard mass every day, and taught his varlets to sing hymns — *Ave, maris stella* — in place of love songs or drinking catches. Often Blanche took him to Notre-Dame de Chartres. The two paid for the great window, the "Rose de France," in the north transept, where the Virgin sits in glory holding her baby in her arms, sur-

rounded by worshipping doves, thrones, and angels, while grisaille borders show the proud insignia of Castile. The famous statues of the western portals had been carved long before — mystical statues, although of kings and queens; too naïve, too little observant of the human frame, to be human; lessons, perhaps, in the subordination of self to the service of a greater whole. Probably Louis saw the sculptors at work on the statues of the central portal of the north porch, where Saint Anne holds the little Virgin on her lap, and on the earliest figures of the south porch. In this manner, guided by Queen Blanche, the young King learned lessons of piety. The storied windows repeated the same religious injunctions.

The Abbé Suger had put the earliest French stained glass that there is record of in the abbey of Saint-Denis in 1144, the very year after the storm-tossed Abélard had gone to his eternal rest. In the façade at Chartres there are still three of a most heavenly radiance, a Jesse tree and others, with blues “like waters stilled at even.” There is other twelfth-century glass to be seen at le Mans, Angers, Vendôme, Bourges, and Sens, but that at Chartres is incontestably the best. The harmony and intensity of color were not attained again until the sixteenth century. But the thirteenth-century windows are wonderful too, as worshipers in the nave and choir of Chartres well know. A window was the most precious offering to Our Lady. Kings, queens, noblemen, and guilds vied with one another in gifts of windows through which light should seem to bring the very essence of Heaven. Most portrayed religious subjects. In those days all art ministered to religion. The reliquaries made at Limoges, by goldsmiths and coppersmiths, working with enamel in cloisonné, or the more recent champlevé, — imitating miniatures in Byzantine missals from the monastic libraries at Saint-Martial

or Grandmont, — retold the Crucifixion or episodes of the Nativity.

Saint Louis, being a sensitive spirit, was profoundly religious in the mediæval sense. The straight road to Heaven had been but lately pointed out by a sweet saint of Assisi, whose name came from France, and whose mother, perhaps, was Provençal. How Louis delighted in that sweet Franciscan fragrance we know from the story of how the King, dressed as a pilgrim, went on a journey to the Franciscan monastery in Perugia to see Brother Giles. The two were closeted together for a long time, but neither said a single word. When the pilgrim was gone, the friars, learning who the guest had been, rushed to Brother Giles and rebuked him for not speaking a word to a great king who had come from so far. But Brother Giles replied: "Dear Brothers, do not marvel at this, that neither I to him, nor he to me, could utter a word, because as soon as we clasped one another in our arms the light of divine wisdom revealed and made manifest his heart to me and mine to him, and so, looking into one another's hearts by this divine working, we knew what we wished to say, each to the other, better than if we had spoken with our lips and with much greater comfort . . . so know for sure that the King went away greatly comforted."

With such an education, it naturally came to pass that in a great illness Louis took the vow to go on a crusade if he should get well, and also that on his recovery he determined to make a thank offering. He bought from the Emperor of Constantinople the True Cross, the Crown of Thorns, the Sacred Lance and Sponge, and bade his architect, Pierre de Montereau, build a chapel beside the royal palace in the *cit  * to house them. Pierre de Montereau pushed the Gothic principles of tenuous structure to the utmost limit; he wrought slender pillars for the nave,



laid delicate ribs roundabout the great windows, glorious in reds and blues, of gemlike magnificence, and created a *châsse*, a reliquary, the Sainte-Chapelle (1246-1248), over which, alas, Viollet-le-Duc, like the Angel of the Lord over the first-born of Egypt, has passed. Then the King collected his crusaders, and, being without a safe port, so uncertain still was the loyalty of the barons of the *midi*, bought the marshy flats of Aiguesmortes, built the Tour de Constance, dug a channel to the sea, and sailed away to Egypt, in the belief that Egypt was the key to the Holy Land (1248).

In Egypt the difficulties were enormous. The heat was intense, armor intolerable, food bad, the scurvy and other diseases broke out. The French were defeated and Louis taken prisoner. He was ransomed at last. On his return he devoted himself to the establishment of justice and the enforcement of law. He heard causes himself, sitting under a great oak tree at Vincennes. He reformed the judicial procedure, rejecting "wager of battle and other judgments of God." He said, "*Bataille n'est pas voie de droit*. (The path of Justice does not cross the dueling ground.)" He did what he could to transfer the administration of justice from the feudal nobles to royal judges. He urged the liberation of serfs, and extended the rights of the city folk, burghers, and guilds of artisans. His life, like that of Joan of Arc, is one of the spiritual glories of France.

He fulfilled all the duties and ceremonies enjoined by Christian usage, he was ascetic, he slept on boards and wore sackcloth; but he was not weak-kneed towards ecclesiasts, and, though he did not believe that fighting brought about the triumph of right reason, he was reckless of danger and defended his possessions. The old struggle with the House of Anjou broke out again. Louis

got the best of it at the battle of Taillebourg (1242), but gave Henry III of England terms so favorable that his counselors grumbled, for in those days it was the custom to make the conquered pay to the full. But the King did what he thought just and right. His conscience, however, did not suffer him to stay at home, but sent him on another crusade to Tunis, where he died (1270).

During most of his reign there was peace in France, and prosperity came at the heels of peace. Every year a great fair was held at Troyes or Provins, where all the mediæval world of business and finance elbowed each other — Lombard bankers, merchants of the Hanseatic League, traders from Venice, from Constantinople, from London, from Bourges, dealers in enamel from Limoges, in silks from Lyons, in weapons from Castile, in spices and precious stones from the orient, and sellers of stock and grain from the provinces of France. With wealth, civilization grew. Genius does not necessarily increase with riches, but the standard of living rises, and demands for the satisfaction of more refined tastes follow. So it was in France.

A good indication of this general condition of increasing civilization is the advent of that great achievement of fine intelligence, French prose. Poetry always precedes prose, for it deals with religion, with myths, with legends, traditions, emotions, and ideal imaginings, whereas prose comes close to everyday life and the common interests of men. The first conspicuous monument of French prose is an account of the Fourth Crusade, when Baldwin of Flanders and Boniface of Montserrat were diverted from their pious purpose of rescuing Jerusalem from the infidel and captured Constantinople from fellow Christians instead (1204). Geoffrey de Villehardouin of Champagne (1155-1213), a countryman and younger contemporary of Chrétien de Troyes, went upon this expedition and dic-

tated a chronicle of it (1207-1212). It is a clear, direct narrative, simple, at least in appearance, composed in rather a grand manner, as became a French lord, seated at his desk in his castle on the borders of Bulgaria. It is most interesting; scene succeeds scene of high romance: the French barons begging the Venetians for ships, the prayers for success in San Marco, the capture of Lara, the scruples and withdrawal of Simon de Montfort, the assault upon the walls of Constantinople under "blind old Dandolo," and much more. It is said — for it is the business of critics to be both astute and suspicious — that Villehardouin had in mind rather the justification of this diversion of a crusading army from war on infidels to war on fellow Christians than a whole-hearted desire to tell the unvarnished truth. However that may be, the solicitude to clear himself does not detract from the interest of his story. It is the first product of French literature since the *Chanson de Roland* that an unscholarly reader would read for pleasure. The matter, too, is important, for the French became a great influence in the east; all Europeans were called Franks, and French developed into a sort of international language; in 1254, for instance, the Sultan of Aleppo wrote to the Venetians in French, and Brunetto Latini and Marco Polo, and other Italians, wrote in French.

This chronicle of the Fourth Crusade belongs to the reign of Philippe Auguste. Another such chronicle, *Des saintes paroles et des bons faiz de nostre roi Saint Loois*, concerns the reign of Saint Louis and his campaign in Egypt, but it was not actually written till the author, Jean, Sire de Joinville, Sénéchal de Champagne (1224-1319), was well on in life. Joinville, at the time a lad of twenty-three or -four, accompanied King Louis on his first crusade to Egypt, and lived with him on familiar

terms for six years. The book contains a brief first part repeating the King's sayings, and a much longer second part telling of his doings. The book is charming. Sainte-Beuve says that *il a de la gentillesse, de la grâce enfantine si l'on peut dire, une imagination tendre et vivante*. It gives, as no other book does, a picture of romantic Christian knighthood, in its enchanting mediæval twilight, almost beyond the limits of credulity: the King's illness, his comrade's vow, his mother's despair, Joinville's own preparations, the embarkment at Aiguesmortes, the crossing, the landing at Damietta, the defeat of the French, Joinville's capture, his counsels to the King — it is all one beautiful romance, like chapters from the quest of the Holy Grail. Joinville himself is frank and charming; for instance, the King, who is very fond of him, asked him whether he had rather be a leper or have committed a mortal sin, and he promptly answered, "Thirty, Beau Sire."

There is other literature of note in this thirteenth century, both in prose and poetry, but nothing to modern readers so interesting as the works I have mentioned. But common fame has its rights, and I must mention three poets of the thirteenth century. In the early decades of the century when Louis IX was a boy, Guillaume de Lorris wrote the *Roman de la Rose*. This is a treatise on the art among well-bred people of making love; it traces its descent from Ovid's *Ars Amatoria*. Of course it is full of allegory; a lady like a rose stands in the garden of love. The lovers were making elaborate moves, somewhat as in a drowsy game of chess, and had not achieved much progress, when Guillaume de Lorris stopped. Perhaps he died; perhaps he repented. Forty or fifty years later, Jean Clopinel de Meung added 18,000 verses to his predecessor's 4669. Jean de Meung in the end allows the lover

to gather the rose, but only by a sort of Polonius path that leads through all the information and ideas that the author possessed on life, religion, ethics, and on the world in general. *Requiescat in pace.*

Rutebeuf is much more interesting. He was a poor devil of a poet who lived in Paris. It is said that if one wishes to learn the state of mind of the bourgeoisie of Paris in the latter years of the reign of Saint Louis one must read Rutebeuf. He writes on many subjects — on his marriage, on his repentance, on the death of princes, on games of dice, on incidents of the crusades, on the philosopher William of Saint-Amour, together with attacks on monks and the monastic system, and hymns to Our Lady :

*Tu es le lis où Dieu repose ;  
Tu es le rosier qui porte rose  
Blanche et vermeille.*

But his favorite subject is his poverty :

*Je ne sai par où je coumance  
Tant ai de matyere abondance  
Por parleir de ma povretei.*

And to the King he says: "Sire, I let you know that I have not the wherewithal to buy bread; though I am in Paris in the midst of all good things, not a crumb belongs to me." He has been ill in bed for three months; his wife is in another bed, great with child; dice had done him an ill turn; dice had robbed him, they were ready to murder him, they were lying in wait round the corner. His editor says that he is the first and the most rounded of the thirteenth-century *trouvères*, as they call the poets of the *langue d'oïl*, to distinguish them from the *troubadours*, those of the *langue d'oc*.



Adam de la Halle (1240-1283) was a younger contemporary. He came from Arras. He does not seem to have felt any great affection for his native town, for in one of his poetic dialogues the question is posed: "Would you promise to live always in Arras with your lady love, without seeing anybody else, and never going out of town?" He is best remembered by *Le jeu de Robin et de Marion*, a little pastoral play set to music; it has been called the first opéra comique. The plot is that Marion refuses the addresses of the Chevalier Aubert and remains true to Robin, who, however, is somewhat of a lout:

*Vous perdés vo paine, sire Aubert,  
Je n'aimerai autrui que Robert;  
Robins m'aime, Robins m'a;  
Robins m'a demandée, si m'ara.*

This little play was acted in Naples, before Charles of Anjou, brother to Saint Louis, who at the Pope's behest had won that kingdom, once conquered by the Hauteville family, from the last of the Hohenstaufens.

## VII

### POLITICAL EVENTS (1270-1328)

DANTE says that it is rare that human worth flows up from the stock into the branch, rare that a son equals his father in virtue; he certainly might have cited in support of his opinion the succession of Philippe le Hardi to his father Saint Louis. It is difficult to understand why this honorable epithet, "the Bold," was conferred upon him; he was an ill-educated, ill-advised, unsuccessful, ordinary man with a passion for hunting. His reign, 1270-1285, is full of uninteresting wars in the southland, which I shall pass by; he had trouble with Edward Longshanks of England over Guyenne and Gascony, with the Count de Foix, with the king of Castile, and with the king of Aragon. The reign of his son and successor, Philippe le Bel (1285-1314), on the contrary, bristles with interesting and dramatic events. The character of this king is wrapped in obscurity. Some say that he was a great ruler, a leader in a rapidly changing world; others disparage him as a docile implement in the hands of able and unscrupulous men. His younger contemporary, the Florentine historian Giovanni Villani, says: "He was one of the handsomest men in the world, very large, and very well proportioned; by nature he took his own counsel and was admirable, from the layman's point of view, but he devoted himself to his pleasures, especially hunting, and instead of putting his abilities to the service of the State he left public matters to others, and he was too credulous, so that many ill-advised things were done, and the kingdom ran dangerous risks."

Philippe's government, at any rate, had definite ideas of policy. Possibly they were no more than the elementary purposes of all creatures to grasp and hold all they can; but some French historians see in them what they call the reaching out toward the country's *natural boundaries*, by which, as I have said, they mean the Pyrenees, the Atlantic, the Rhine, and the Alps. As yet there was no open effort to reach the Rhine, but the marriage of Saint Louis to a Provençal princess showed that France had her eyes on the Alps, and one may interpret Philippe le Bel's war with Edward I of England over Guyenne and Gascony as a move to push the west boundary of France to the ocean, and his war with the Count of Flanders, who had fiefs in the Empire as well as those depending on France, as an effort toward the Rhine; but France got neither Guyenne nor Flanders. Peace came at last. One term in the treaty with England, the marriage of Edward II with Isabelle, daughter of Philippe, was fraught with dire consequences, for their son Edward III claimed the French crown and brought on the Hundred Years' War.

When I said that the reign of Philippe le Bel bristled with dramatic events, I had chiefly in mind his quarrel with Boniface VIII and the suppression of the Knights Templars. The quarrel with the Papacy may be regarded as the first episode in the policy of the French monarchy to keep the French Church as independent as might be of Rome, a policy subsequently known as the doctrine of Gallican liberties, or Gallicanism. Benedetto Gaetani, a Roman nobleman, had by dubious proceedings caused his underwitted predecessor, Celestine V, to resign, and had procured his own election to the Papacy as Boniface VIII. He was a very old man, hot-tempered and splenetic, bred upon the great traditions of the papal chancery that re-

called how Gregory VII and Innocent III had imposed their will upon stiff-necked kings. But that mediæval world, unbeknownst to Boniface, had passed away. In France a school of lawyers had arisen who stoutly upheld royal rights against the pretensions, as they called them, of the Papacy. Among these students of Roman law in the university of Montpellier was one Guillaume de Nogaret, whose aversion to churchmen, whetted by his legal training, was originally due to the fact that his grandfather had been burned as a heretic. Nogaret became one of the King's counselors. A controversy between King and Pope soon broke out. It is crammed with intricate details. Suffice it to say that the King, pinched for money, taxed the French clergy, which according to ultramontane doctrines was an uncanonical proceeding; the Pope issued a bull forbidding kings to levy such taxes, and forbidding the clergy to pay them. The King retaliated by an ordinance that no gold or silver should be sent out of the realm, thereby cutting off the papal revenues. At first the Pope, hampered by a local war against Roman barons, the Colonna, gave way; but after he had run the plough, and scattered salt over the Colonna stronghold, and his pride had been quickened by a papal jubilee (1300), he went at it again, and in another bull asserted that God had set him over all kings, with power to build up and to cast down, to plant and to uproot — pedantic phrases borrowed from Jeremiah and Isaiah, familiar for centuries to papal scribes, but with no greater significance than legal phraseology in Blackstone's time, and on the whole harmless if passed over. But the King's counselors would not pass the matter over; they swelled with anger. The Pope convoked a synod of French prelates to meet in Rome to consider the points at issue; thereupon the King held a great council, of the three orders of the realm, lords,

prelates, and commons, in Notre-Dame de Paris, in 1302, "to deliberate on certain matters that are of the highest concern to the King, the kingdom, to all and each." This may be considered the definite beginning of the States-General. Other assemblies of the several orders, or of chosen bodies, had been held before, but this, owing to the seriousness of the issue and the determination of the King's counselors to have a united nation at the King's back, was the most solemn and most important of those held up to that time. The assembly vowed to uphold the King and the independence of the kingdom.

The synod at Rome was held some six months later (November 1302), and Boniface again promulgated his familiar doctrine of the papal position with regard to Christian kings. Nevertheless, it would seem that there was still a chance for the more moderate men on both sides to effect a reconciliation. Instead of that, in February 1303, Guillaume de Nogaret, who nursed an implacable personal hatred against the Pope, concocted a plot, which the King approved, to descend into Italy, band together with the Colonna, kidnap the old Pope and fetch him before an ecclesiastical council in France for trial. Meetings were held in the Louvre to denounce Boniface. One of the charges against him alleged that he had said that he "had rather be a dog than a Frenchman." That was more than the Parisians could bear.

Nogaret and his fellow conspirators — Sciarra Colonna, a Florentine named Musciatto, and others — met near the border of Florence and Siena and collected together the personal enemies of the Pope. Boniface was in Anagni, a little town to the south of Rome. On the seventh of September the conspirators, with a few hundred armed men, forced their way in. The townsfolk at first joined them. They tramped through the cathedral and broke



into the episcopal palace; there they found the old man, abandoned by all, seated with his tiara on his head and with cross and keys in his hand. Sciarra Colonna would have killed him, but Nogaret stayed his hand, and made the Pope prisoner. It was a brutal and dastardly act, and Nogaret and Philippe le Bel have met a just punishment at the hands of Dante, who, though he too hated Boniface, says that Christ suffered a second Passion in the person of his vicar.

A reaction soon took place. Nogaret found it impossible to carry away his prisoner. The fickle townsfolk rose to a rescue. The conspirators fled. Old Boniface died of the outrage. But the power of France in the papal court became such that two years later Bertrand de Got, archbishop of Bordeaux, having made a bargain with the French King, was elected Pope, and, as Clement V, transferred the seat of the Papacy to Avignon, and thereby dealt a blow to the papal prestige that helped open a way for the Protestant Reformation in the sixteenth century.

The other dramatic episode of Philippe's reign is the process against the Templars. This great order, founded soon after the First Crusade, had branches in various parts of Europe. Sir Walter Scott has taught us to believe in their worldliness, ambition, and arrogance, and we imagine all the knights like Sir Brian de Bois-Guilbert. The order had become very rich, and one of its occupations, now that the Holy Land had been lost, was to act as bankers for kings and princes, storing funds in their fortresses or letting them out at usury. For these reasons, aggravated by the fact that the order had failed in its primal duty to prevent the Turks from conquering Palestine, it had become very unpopular. Stories were told of depravity and heresy among the knights. The only motive apparent to turn the King against them lay in the fact of

their riches and of his royal poverty. But Nogaret, who was a sort of Iago, entertained a violent hatred against them, perhaps because he classed the order with the priesthood that had burned his grandfather. Suddenly, without warning, in October 1307, all over France on the same day the knights were arrested in their various temples, thrown into prison, accused of heresy, and handed over to the inquisitors. They were put to the torture. In Paris twenty-five died. Under the hellish pains their physical endurance gave way and almost all admitted the abominable crimes, blasphemies, and acts of sacrilege that they were charged with.

The French Pope, Clement V, was asked to suppress the order. He said that he was ill, sought to temporize, hemmed and hawed, until Nogaret, impatient at any thwarting, began to circulate accusations against him and to threaten to bring him before an ecclesiastical council. Clement had little courage. Nogaret did not wait for his tergiversations. In Paris fifty-four Templars, who, after having confessed, recanted and tried to defend themselves from the charges, were condemned by the Inquisition overnight for their relapse, as it was called, and burned outside the Porte Antoine (May 1310). Finally the Pope yielded to pressure and dissolved the order, but directed that the property should go to the Knights Hospitalers. That anticlimax was avoided. In the first place, the King's debts to the Templars were wiped out by the fact of their heresy; second, there were the expenses of their imprisonment, torture, burning, and so forth; and on one pretext or another the King took the lion's share. To crown all, the Grand Master, Jacques de Molai, and the Preceptor for Normandy, Geoffroi de Charnai, were burned in Paris (March 1314) on the île des Juifs opposite the quai des Augustins. I think

that no impartial person now believes in the guilt of the Templars. The chief *dramatis personæ* of the tragedy — Clement V, Nogaret, and Philippe le Bel — died within a few months thereafter.

This dramatic episode of the destruction of the Knights Templars, and that more dramatic still of the outrage at Anagni, were accompanied by others — for instance, that of the imprisonment of the King's three daughters-in-law and the hideous torture of their alleged lovers, in which Queen Isabella, wife of Edward II of England, plays the informer's part, and that (legendary perhaps) of sewing in a sack the philosopher Buridan and flinging him into the Seine; and others as well. These I mention only as a reminder that, in spite of Saint Louis and the Sainte-Chapelle, in spite of Chartres, Reims, and Amiens, in spite of Aucassin and Nicolette, of Robin and Marion, we are still in an age of cruelty and grossness. Philippe le Bel, whether directly responsible or merely a facile implement, was punished, if one may consider it punishment, by the feebleness of his successors, who seem to come forward merely to prophesy the hideous tragedy of the Hundred Years' War. Philippe's son, Louis X (1314–1316), surnamed *le Hutin*, the Scuffler, — on account of his character, according to some, or, according to others, of the turbulence of the times, — died without a son. His infant daughter Joan, and his brother Philippe, were both candidates for the succession. A convocation of notables was held at Paris, and it was then asserted that no woman could inherit the crown of France. Philippe V (1316–1322), also died without a son, and then his brother, Charles IV (1322–1328), died without a son, and their cousin of the House of Valois, their nearest male heir, succeeded — Philippe VI (1328–1350). Here followed punishment, not perhaps for the crimes against Boniface

VIII and the Knights of the Temple, but for the great political offense of leaving no son. Edward III of England, son of Isabella, daughter of Philippe le Bel, denied the Salic law and asserted that his claim to the throne of France was better than that of the House of Valois. Hence the Hundred Years' War.

## VIII

### THE HUNDRED YEARS' WAR

THE claim of Edward III of England to the French crown as grandson to Philippe le Bel through his mother was not the only cause of the war. There had been quarrels between the two kings in Guyenne and in Flanders. Edward, as Duke of Guyenne, was liegeman to the king of France, and he did not play the part well; while as to Flanders, it was of the utmost importance for the English wool merchants that England should maintain political control over the Flemish markets. Under the strain of conflicting interests peace gave way. Philippe said that he meant to take Guyenne, and Edward assumed the title and heraldic arms of King of France. War broke out in 1337. There was desultory fighting in Guyenne; and in Brittany, where the English supported one claimant to the duchy and the French another. In 1340 the English won a great sea fight off Sluys; but it was not till 1346 that a serious battle was fought on land.

The English king, having command of the sea, landed at his good pleasure in Normandy. He sacked Caen and marched southward, but, apprehensive lest he should get too far from supplies and be surrounded, he turned about, crossed the Seine, and proceeded towards Flanders. Philippe, who had gathered together a very much larger army, followed in pursuit, but failed to catch the enemy at the passage of the river Somme as he should have done. Edward, at bay, entrenched at Crécy; ditches were digged, trees felled, and barricades thrown up. That night the French army halted at Abbeville, some thirteen



or fourteen miles away, and, getting up betimes, covered the intervening distance early the next morning. They reached the English camp hungry, thirsty, and tired. The French king wished to postpone the fight, but his nobles insisted and advanced to the attack in disorderly fashion. The Genoese crossbowmen were ordered to the front, but a violent rain had wet their bowstrings, and the English archers shot so fast and straight that the Genoese turned and fled. King Philippe said, "Slee these rascals, for they shall lette and trouble us without reason," and his infuriated knights obeyed. There was neither generalship nor discipline; one troop got in another's way. The English long bows did dire execution; their arrows of a long cloth yard fell "like snowflakes"; and then the English men-at-arms rushed in among the disordered French knights, hocking and hamstringing.

The Black Prince distinguished himself,

Making defeat on the full power of France,  
Whiles his most mighty father on a hill  
Stood smiling to behold his lion's whelp  
Forage in blood of French nobility.

Again and again the French tried to charge, but without plan or leaders, and at the end of the day they gave way and fled headlong, every man for himself. The rout was complete. Philippe had two horses killed under him and was wounded, the oriflamme was torn, and four thousand Frenchmen were slain, many of high renown. The English loss was inconsiderable.

King Edward retired to the coast and laid siege to Calais. For eleven months the city made an heroic resistance. Philippe tardily collected another army and advanced to the English lines, but, fearful of another field of Crécy, withdrew without attacking. There was

nothing left in the town to eat; dogs, cats, rats, and mice had been devoured. The garrison asked for terms. Edward replied: "Many English have died; it is now your turn to die." Finally he consented to spare the city upon condition that the six principal burghers should come, in shirts, barefoot, bareheaded, with halters round their necks, and on them he would wreak his will. There was sorrow and lamentation when these terms were communicated, and hesitation; but the richest burgher of them all, Eustache de Saint-Pierre, stepped forward. "It would be grievous pity," he said, "to let the people die of hunger if there are means to save them; their salvation would be an almsgiving in the sight of God, and I have a good hope that if I die for the people God will forgive my sins. So I offer to be the first man." Others followed his example, and the six (as you may see them in Rodin's great modeling), lean, gaunt, noble, ready to die, barelegged and bareheaded, with halters round their necks, bade good-bye to their fellow citizens and walked to the English camp. Sir Walter Manny and many other distinguished English gentlemen supplicated in vain that the six should be spared. King Edward bade them be led to execution. Then his wife, Queen Philippa of Hainault, niece to Philippe of Valois, threw herself at the King's feet. Of her Froissart says: "Though I should live for a thousand years, I shall never see a better or a nobler lady than she." She said: "My very dear lord, since I crossed the sea, in great peril, I have asked never a boon. Now I humbly beseech you, for the sake of Mary's Son, and for my love, to pardon these six men." So he did; but Calais became an English city, and remained so for more than two hundred years.

The defeat at Crécy and the loss of Calais were severe blows to France, but a greater disaster followed; the

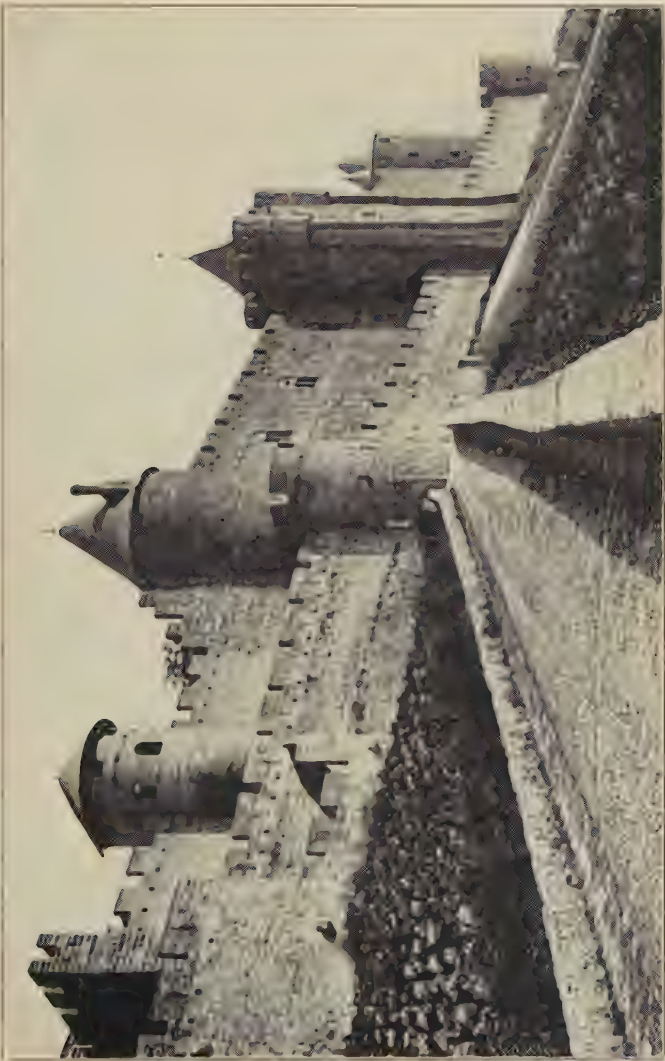
bubonic plague came up from the south on its northward way. It had swept through Italy coming from the orient. Boccaccio has told how it slaughtered men and beasts in the city of Florence, and how ten young ladies and gentlemen fled to a villa on the way to Fiesole, and diverted their thoughts by telling in turn the tales of the *Decameron*. The plague stalked through Provence, and on northward, killing, it has been conjectured, half the population, and then crossed the Channel, carrying black death to England (1347-1349).

Philippe VI died in August 1350, and his son John, whimsically called Jean le Bon, succeeded him. There is a portrait of this king in the Louvre, painted perhaps soon after his coronation, with heavy jaw, coarse mouth, keen, untrustworthy eyes, and a shock of tawny hair. Matters went badly at once, and the story becomes very entangled. Everything was at odds. There was war between England and France; there was division between France of the north, of the *langue d'oïl*, and that of the south, of the *langue d'oc*, still so marked that the two halves held separate States-General. The bourgeoisie of Paris rose against the King, the King's son and those loyal to them; the peasants rose against the noblesse; and bands of brigands robbed and pillaged from everyone. And there was a displeasing character in national politics — the king of Navarre, a grandson of Philippe le Bel, known as Charles the Bad; and a patriot, or demagogue, of Paris, Étienne Marcel, who plays for a time a part not unlike those of the great tribunes of the French Revolution, leaders of the people against the aristocracy.

As I say, matters began badly; Jean le Bon lavished favors on a kinsman of Spanish descent. This preference excited great jealousy and anger, especially in the ambitious heart of Charles the Bad, and he laid an ambush

for the favorite and had him murdered. The King vowed vengeance. Charles the Bad, to save himself, turned for help to the English, and, as he possessed various cities and castles in Normandy, his alliance was of great value to King Edward; the two made a pact by which Edward was to become king of France and Charles the duke of several duchies. Meanwhile the war smouldered on; the Black Prince, a resolute, able, cruel man, of charming manners, led forays from his duchy of Guyenne into the French provinces. One year he traversed the rich province of Languedoc, burning, pillaging, ravaging in the mediæval fashion, as far as Narbonne, holding the nobles to ransom and slaughtering the common many. Only the walls of Carcassonne held him at bay. Jean le Bon, who did not lack courage, made preparations for defense and retaliation, but his purse was lean to the famine point; the *livre tournois* had fallen to one tenth its value. It was necessary to ask help of the States-General, prelates, nobles, and commons. So while that of the south, for the *langue d'oc*, met at Toulouse, that of the north, for the *langue d'oïl*, met at Paris.

Here, in the assemblage at Paris, Étienne Marcel steps upon the stage. He was the provost of the merchants of Paris, *Prévôt des marchands*, an office with considerable political authority, like a mayor. You may see the statue erected to him, as the earliest champion of the liberties of the people, near the Hôtel de Ville. There were but few nobles present, as they did not like the growing power of the cities and the bourgeoisie, and kept away. Étienne Marcel played the foremost part. The States-General granted taxes, but exacted such conditions as no subjects had dared propound before. The States-General should control both the levy and the spending of the moneys, they should pay the troops, buy equipment and supplies —



CARCASSONNE





in short, manage the whole matter in place of the king. It was the first parliamentary attempt to limit the absolute authority of the King, and a radical attempt it was.

Clipped and curtailed in his authority by the commons, the King seems to have turned his spleen upon the disobedient nobles. He did an evil deed. One cannot say that it drew upon him the punishment of the defeat at Poitiers, but perhaps one can say that he deserved that defeat. His son, Charles, was now Dauphin, for France had contrived to reach out across the Rhone and secure Dauphiné, and had bestowed the title that belonged to the lord thereof on the King's eldest son. The Dauphin was also Duke of Normandy, and in his duchy he wished to conciliate, or, it may be, to get rid of, those noblemen who had followed Charles the Bad and sided with the English. He gave a great banquet, to which he invited Charles the Bad, and other malcontents, chief of them the comte d'Harcourt. In the midst of the feast King Jean burst in with soldiers, berated Harcourt with gross insults, seized Charles the Bad by the hair of his head, upbraiding him as a traitor. "By my father's soul, I will not eat nor drink so long as you are alive!" Harcourt and others were immediately executed; but Charles the Bad was merely put in prison. The Dauphin's collusion is very doubtful. The King then started on a military campaign to subdue the other rebellious barons of Normandy and their English allies, who were led by Edward's younger son, the Duke of Lancaster, "Old John of Gaunt," but these operations were abruptly halted by news from the south.

The Black Prince was on another foray, from Bordeaux through Périgord, the Limousin, Berry, and Touraine, going north as far as Amboise. Wherever the Black Prince passed he left dead bodies, destitution, and tears.

The only pleasant sight in France at this time was a lad of nineteen at Valenciennes, writing poetry, reading the chronicles of one Jean le Bel of Liége, stocking his *mémoire ymaginative* with tales of contemporary chivalry, and making preparation for his own brocaded story. I mean Jean Froissart, whom I shall soon quote. When King John had learned that the Black Prince had come into Touraine, he turned from Normandy and marched to meet him. The Black Prince retreated. Somehow the French reached Poitiers first, and hoped to get between the English and their line of retreat to Bordeaux. The Black Prince, who was very near, took a position a few miles away and fortified it. His back was protected by a little stream, his sides by rolling hills, intersected by vineyards and hedges. In front there was one narrow road of approach, and this was guarded by ditches and barricades to right and left, in such fashion that from both sides archers could pour close volleys into an attacking force. The English were seven thousand strong, the French thrice that number; but the French army was a motley collection of nobles and men-at-arms, with no tactics, no training in the discipline of war, and with no leaders of worth, whereas the Black Prince was an excellent soldier, and several of his captains, Sir John Chandos, the Captal de Buch, and others, were seasoned warriors, and his army was compact and orderly.

The better heads among King John's advisers counseled him not to attack the Prince in that position, but the hot-heads accused the prudent of cowardice, and on the nineteenth of September the battle was fought. I will quote passages from Froissart in Lord Berner's translation. The Black Prince harangued his men: "Now sirs, though we be but a small company as in regard to the puyssance of our ennemyes, let us nat be abashed therfore; for the

victory lyeth nat in the multitude of people, but wher as God wyll sende it. Yf it fortune that the journey be ours, we shal be the moost honoured people of all the worlde; and if we dye in our right quarell, I have the Kyng my father and brethrene, and also ye have good frendes and kynsmen; these shall revenge us: therfor, sirs, for Goddes sake, I requyre you do your devoyers this day; for if God be pleased and saynt George, this day ye shall se me a good knyght." He then granted to Sir John Chandos the privilege of being "one of the first setters-on," and likewise to Sir Eustace Dambretycourt, who "beyng a horsebacke layed his spear in the rest and ran into the French batayle; and then a knyght of Almayne [for these were Germans with King John] called the lord Loyes of Coucoubbras, who bore a shelde sylver, fyve rosses goules; and Sir Eustace bare ermyns, two hamedes of goules. When this Almayne saw the lord Eustace come fro his company, he rode agaynst hym and they mette so rudely, that both knyghtes fell to the yerth. The Almayne was hurt in the shoulder, therefore he rose not so quickly as dyde Sir Eustace, who whan he was up and had taken his breth, he came to the other knyght as he lay on the ground: but thane fyve other knyghtes of Almayne came on hym all at ones, and bore him to the yerth; and so perforce there he was taken prisoner and brought to the erle of Nosco [Nassau], who as than toke no hede of hymn; and I can not say whyther they sware him prisoner or no, but they tyed hym to a chare [cart] and there lette hym stande. Than the batayle began on all partes, and the batayle of the marshals of Fraunce aproched, and they set forthe that were apoynted to breke the ray of the archers. They entred a horsebacke into the way where the great hedges were on bothe sydes sette full of archers; assone as the men of armes entred, the

archers began to shote on both sydes and dyd slee and hurt horses and knyghtes, so that the horses when they felt the sharpe arowes they wolde in no wyse go forward, but dreive abacke and flang and toke on so feersly, that many of them fell on their maisters, so that for preace they cowde nat ryse agayne; in so moche that the marshals batayle could never come at the Prince."

The first ranks of the French fell back in disarray while the rear ranks came up to support them. Crowded together, horse and foot, all was disorder. The Captal de Buch sallied out with a small force and fell upon their flank. Only King John held his own. Sir John Chandos said to the Black Prince, "Sir, take your horse and ryde forth, this journey is yours; God is this day in your handes: gette us to the French kynges batayle, but their lyeth all the sore of the mater; I thynke verily by his valyantness he woll nat flye: I trust we shall have hym by the grace of God and saynt George." So the Prince gave the order, "Avaunce baner, in the name of God and of saynt George!" It fell out as Sir John Chandos anticipated. The King was taken prisoner, and many others of note; but the flower of French chivalry lay dead upon the field, together with twenty-five hundred men-at-arms. The Dauphin narrowly escaped. The English lost but few. The defeat was far worse than at Crécy. King John was carried in triumph to London, where he was well treated, and lived in great style on moneys and dainties sent to him from France.



## IX

### JEAN LE BON, CHARLES V, CHARLES VI

THE defeat at Poitiers shook the kingdom. The Dauphin, a lad of nineteen, a shrewd fellow and disciplined by hardship, assumed the government as the King's lieutenant. Troubles raged about him. There were the victorious English in the background. But greater dangers lay near by. The people were furious at the incompetence and military stupidity of the nobles. In Paris, under the leadership of Étienne Marcel, the citizens took control of the city; their discontent verged upon disloyalty, or even rebellion, and some went so far as to entertain the idea of putting Charles the Bad, King of Navarre, on the throne. Another meeting of the States-General of the north, of the *langue d'oïl*, was again held in Paris. As before, there were few nobles, and the indignation of the deputies flashed up. They granted an army of thirty thousand men, but they demanded a great share of power in the government, and in particular formulated three demands: the dismissal of the King's counselors, the substitution of others chosen by themselves, and the release of Charles of Navarre. The Dauphin attempted to temporize and evade, but he was obliged to assent. His counselors were deposed, some were prosecuted, the States-General took control of the taxes, and Charles of Navarre was released.

Little or nothing was gained by these concessions. Word came from King John to say that he was negotiating a truce with the English and that he forbade the States-General to meet again. Here was more fuel for anger and confusion. Étienne Marcel refused to obey, and the States-

General met. Charles of Navarre, released from prison, came to Paris and set about currying favor with the populace, while his brother, with soldiers raised in Normandy and Navarre, consorted with the English. The Dauphin was virtually ousted from the office of lieutenant for the King; but he was a lad of spirit, and went out into the streets and argued his cause with the people. The tension between the two parties grew — the Dauphin on one side, Étienne Marcel and the populace, supported by Charles of Navarre, on the other. Acts of violence were committed. Signs presaged a revolution. One day the servant of a horse dealer demanded payment from the Dauphin's treasurer, who rejected the claim. The valet stabbed him in the back, and fled for refuge to the church of Saint-Merri. You will find it still, near the Tour Saint-Jacques, though completely altered. One of the Dauphin's marshals, Robert de Clermont, went with a posse, broke into the church, dragged the varlet to the scene of the murder, hacked off his hand, and then hanged him. A bishop of the opposing party excommunicated the marshal. The two funerals were held on the same day, that of the treasurer attended by the Dauphin and that of the varlet attended by Étienne Marcel. The reader feels an atmosphere like that which preceded the Revolution of 1789. Circumstance on circumstance rose, like angry waves, to drive the ship of state on the rocks. It transpired that the King was negotiating a treaty of peace, including his release, and that therefore he would be coming back to Paris. That home-coming threatened danger to the rebellious chiefs of the people's party. Fear or anger got the upper hand with them. Étienne Marcel led several thousand armed men to the royal palace; on their way they met one of the Dauphin's counselors and murdered him. It is the prototype of scenes in 1792. They found

the Dauphin sitting on a sofa with his two marshals, Jean de Conflans and Robert de Clermont; they hacked these two in pieces, and spattered the Dauphin with blood. The Dauphin begged that his own life might be spared; Marcel took from him his cap and replaced it with his own of two colors, gray and red, the people's emblem, and explained that the marshals had been put to death by *la volonté du peuple*, and the Dauphin, who remained *moult dolent et ébahi*, was obliged to grant a formal pardon.

Nevertheless, the *Prévôt des marchands* did not feel himself secure. He called upon Charles of Navarre to come back again to Paris, and forced the Dauphin to confirm and extend his former concessions, and also to assume the regency, for he deemed it safer to have a regent than a mere lieutenant in his power. And when the Dauphin made preparations to leave Paris, the *Prévôt* had the squire who busied himself with the preparations put to death; but he did not dare go so far as to lay hands on the Dauphin-Regent himself, and the Dauphin went. Once in safety, the Dauphin showed that he was no man's tool. He found the provinces out of sympathy with Paris, and convoked the States-General to meet at Compiègne; and there, which had not been the case in Paris, the nobles attended in force and declared for him. In Paris the *Prévôt* confiscated the property of those that were not his adherents, and prepared the city for defense. Terror reigned; the Dauphin's partisans effaced themselves; two were murdered. The *Prévôt* was now in open rebellion, and the nobles rallied round the Dauphin.

It is at this point, while the burghers of Paris were defying the aristocracy, that the peasants asserted themselves as a self-conscious class and rose up to do their share of destruction. They were in desperation. The wars with England, now that King John was making

peace, had left great numbers of soldiers, ruffians of all descriptions, out of employment, and these fellows roamed about in bands, under robber chiefs, sometimes men of military note, and pillaged and ravaged at will. The peasants, taxed to the limit of endurance, and bitterly incensed against the upper classes for failure to protect them, rose in multitudes, especially to the north and east of Paris, and went about, in their turn, burning châteaux, stealing cattle, and destroying what they could. How many murders they committed is not known; there is no record. Historians who feel kindly toward the poor downtrodden peasants incline to think that they murdered in a gingerly fashion. That is not what was thought at the time. Stories of what they did passed from mouth to mouth, until their doings — *jacqueries*, as they are called — made the upper classes shiver. Froissart has chronicled some of them.

These peasants, these *jacques*, however, were enemies of the noblesse and of the King's government, and Étienne Marcel, feeling that they and the bourgeois of Paris represented in their several ways a common spirit of revolt against an insufferable and incompetent noblesse, entered into relations with them. It proved an unwise move, for it roused a spirit of solidarity among the nobles. The peasants were ill armed and undisciplined. A well-trained body of men-at-arms, under two *grands seigneurs* of the south, Gaston de Foix and the Captal de Buch, who had fought under the Black Prince at Poitiers, fell upon one band at Meaux, threw them into a panic, and killed and killed until they were tired. Another small army under Charles of Navarre, who, in spite of his affiliation with Étienne Marcel and the bourgeoisie of Paris, loathed the canaille, wrought still greater destruction at Clermont (Oise). Lesser lords from all about took up the pursuit,

and it is said that under their vengeance twenty thousand peasants perished.

Here was an end to any support in that quarter for the bourgeoisie of Paris. Nevertheless, Charles of Navarre, dominated by his ambition to oust his cousin of France, again accepted the office of Captain-General of Paris, and prepared to defend the city against the Dauphin, who was making ready to lay siege to it. Both leaders hesitated to come to blows. They discussed arrangements for peace, but Charles of Navarre also plotted with the English, and Étienne Marcel, who realized that he was in desperate straits, went further and introduced English soldiers into Paris. This seems to have been the direct cause of his undoing. For the Parisians hated the English and drove these English soldiers out again, and the discovery of this discord emboldened the partisans of the Dauphin within the city. We have now reached the end of July 1358. Charles of Navarre had gone out to Saint-Denis, and was engaged in negotiations with the English. He was a famous orator, and perhaps relied on his powers of persuasion, but as he claimed the French crown he made little progress. As I understand it, the French army was to the east of Paris, and English forces to the west, both watching what might happen. Charles of Navarre, in collusion with Étienne Marcel, was planning to stop negotiations with the English, go back into Paris, and there proclaim himself king of France. His treachery frustrated itself. On July 31 Étienne Marcel, accompanied by an officer in the service of the king of Navarre, made the rounds of the city gates. At the gate that led to Saint-Denis he demanded the keys. It must have been that he meant to open the gate to Bad Charles. The guards there were inclined to the French king, and, being suspicious of the *Prévôt*, refused. The



*Prévôt* went on to the next gate; but the captain of the guard of the Saint-Denis gate galloped through the town crying, "*Mon joie! Saint-Denis! Au Roi!*" Probably the royalist partisans were watching their chance. A number followed the rider, and overtook Étienne Marcel parleying with the guards at the second gate. There were hot words, accusations of treachery, and swords drawn. Marcel and several of his supporters were killed on the spot. So ended the first attempt on the part of the bourgeoisie to obtain a share in the government. Times were not ripe. The nobles would not make common cause with the bourgeoisie, nor the bourgeoisie with the peasants. In the midst of disasters in which the very existence of the kingdom was at stake the instinct of the nation felt that an absolute monarchy was the best hope of safety. The Dauphin entered Paris in triumph, and showed that he had received a good education in the school of adversity; he treated the rebels with great leniency, and even granted a pension to Marcel's widow.

The dark days, however, were not over. There was more fighting, but peace slipped in for a time; a truce was made with Navarre, and afterwards a treaty with England (1360) at the cost of nearly half France, Edward on his part renouncing his claim to the French throne and promising to set King John free. Here in the dark abysm of political and social confusion one act of knightly honor, a quality that one had come to believe was confined to the imagination of Breton poets, shines out and dignifies King John's pitiful career. When King John said good-bye to Edward at Calais and quitted captivity, three of his sons were left as hostages until the full payment of his ransom. One of these sons, the Duke of Anjou, amorous of his wife, escaped and fled and refused to go back. When King John heard of this he agreed with King Edward

that his son had *moult blémi l'honneur du roi et de son lignage*, and left Paris and went to Boulogne, took ship for England, and returned to captivity in London, where he died (April 1364).

The Dauphin succeeded to the throne as Charles V (1364-1380). He was a man of far greater abilities than his father, and during his reign he won back the greater part of those provinces that had been ceded to England. I shall not attempt further details of this period. You can read in Froissart's pictured pages how the pageant of war looked to a poet who chronicled history to please Queen Philippa, wife of Edward III, or great Flemish and French noblemen :

"How the provost of the marchauntes of Parys [Étienne Marcel] caused walles to be made about the cytie of Parys.

"How Parys was besieged by the Regent of Fraunce [the Dauphin].

"Of the dethe of the provost of the marchauntes of Parys.

"How the King of Navarre defyed the realme of Fraunce.

"How certayne burgesses of Amyens wolde have delyvered the cytie to the Navarrese, and of the great famyne that was than in ye realme of Fraunce.

"How the robbers and pyllers that kept fortresses in Fraunce began to declyne by myracle.

"How the frenchemen refused the peace that the Kyng had made in England."

Froissart is an artist like those that sewed Queen Matilda's tapestry at Bayeux. But though his courtly feet step lightly over the horrible evils that beset France, you can read them between the lines. The mercenary soldiers, let loose by the peace with England, — English, Gascons, Bretons, Welsh, Germans, Dutch, villainous

rascals, — marched about ravaging and destroying, worse than Tartars in a conquered land. They burned castles, houses, villages, stole women, horses, cattle, food, wine, held rich men to ransom, maimed, hocked, or harried all else. All sorts of attempts were made to get rid of them. Armies, hurriedly levied for the purpose, met with little success; there was always danger of the soldiers joining the brigands. The popes, who since the French domination of the Papacy in the time of Philippe le Bel had taken up their abode at Avignon, trembled in their great castle, and sought with bribes and blessings to send them on a crusade against the Turks, in the fervent hope that they would all be killed. The brigands did not like the plan. Some, however, were diverted into Italy, and a large number into Spain in the pay of a claimant for the crown of Castile. And, as Froissart says, by a miracle the evil declined.

Out of this general mêlée one soldier comes forth with a great reputation — Bertrand du Guesclin (1320–1380), a Breton gentleman. He was a man of great physical strength, courage, and hard common sense, who fought, not according to the Breton traditions of the Knights of the Round Table, but to win. He was the very soldier that France needed. He made a national reputation by a brilliant victory over the Navarrese at Cocherel (1364). He also contrived to lead the brigands into Spain, and there, after great changes of fortune, in which he crossed swords with the Black Prince, he finally set on the throne of Castile the claimant supported by France; and after war again broke out with England, he became Constable and did valiant service in recovering wide regions from the English. You may see his effigy, with puffed cheeks and protuberant eyes, recumbent upon a tomb at Saint-Denis.

*Estoc d'onneur et arbres de vaillance,  
 Cueur de lyon esprins de hardement,  
 La flour des preux et la gloire de France,  
 Victorieux et hardi combatant,  
 Saige en vos fais et bien entreprenant,  
 Souverain homme de guerre,  
 Vainqueur de gèns et conquereur de terre,  
 Le plus vaillant qui onques fust en vie.*

Sword of honor, staff of valor,  
 Lion heart in love with hardihood,  
 Flower of chivalry, glory of France,  
 Victorious and gallant fighter,  
 Wise of deed and full of enterprise,  
 Matchless warrior,  
 Vanquisher of peoples, conquerer of countries,  
 The most valiant man that ever lived.

The Black Prince died in 1376, and Edward III the next year, and the Black Prince's eldest son, the weak and foolish Richard II, who had been born at Bordeaux (while Froissart happened to be there), soon brought England into such confusion that she could do little in France. Charles the Bad continued to make trouble. Always double-dealing, he plotted to poison the king of France; his subordinates were caught and executed, and his kingdom of Navarre invaded by the French and their Castilian allies, and the French king also laid hands upon his possessions in Normandy and elsewhere. Defeated and ruined, Charles the Bad disappears from history, to the satisfaction of poetic justice.

Charles V died in 1380. He had done much for France in his patient, persistent, shrewd, and not overscrupulous fashion. If he possessed certain traits of his ancestor Saint Louis, he also possessed others that were destined to manifest themselves in his descendant Louis XI. Both

his virtues and his wrongdoings served the monarchy. In one respect he is far more real to us, and also his queen, Jeanne de Bourbon, than any of his predecessors, for their statues, carved from life for the portal of the church of the Célestins at Paris, are now in the Louvre. The King wears his crown, and holds his sceptre. His serious, clever, bland, kindly face, with the expression of a shrewd peasant and a benevolent curé blended, shows both dignity and a record of trial. His queen is lifelike, too. Both statues are of painted stone, and stand out as worthy predecessors to the work of Germain Pilon and Houdon. Their son, Charles VI, was but a boy of twelve at his father's death. Four of his nearest kin shared the regency. They had a bushel of troubles. The wars had necessitated heavy taxation, and the people, unable to bear it, revolted or resisted almost everywhere, and a series of encounters, of petty campaigns, was necessary to restore order. In Flanders the burghers of the industrial cities rebelled and a serious battle was necessary to put them down. And from this trouble in Flanders serious consequences flowed. The King's uncle, Philippe le Hardi, Duke of Burgundy, one of the regents, who had married the heiress of the county, asserted his title, and so united Flanders to Burgundy — a union that in the fourth generation, under Charles the Bold, brought the duchy to such a power that it overtopped that of France. Another marriage was also pregnant with evil consequences. The King's brother Louis married the daughter of Gian Galeazzo Visconti, Duke of Milan; and their descendants, kings of France, laid claim to the duchy of Milan.

However, the evils to result from the marriage of the Duke of Burgundy with the heiress of Flanders, and from that of Louis into the ducal house of Visconti, were still far in the future, and at the beginning of the young king's



reign things went well. He married his daughter to Richard II, and it may well have seemed that the long wars between the two countries were at an end. But Richard was dethroned by Henry Bolingbroke, Henry IV, and Charles VI developed madness and went crazy. Poor France seemed to be pursued by angry gods.

## X

### BURGUNDIANS AND ARMAGNACS

(1392-1422)

THE King's madness was at first intermittent; nevertheless, of necessity the government was entrusted more and more to the nearest princes of the blood — to his brother Louis, Duke of Orléans, and to his uncles, the Dukes of Berry and of Burgundy. The duc de Berry played a secondary rôle; he preferred art and the civilization of life to politics. One sympathizes with him, and if it were not popularly supposed that history should deal with politics it would be much pleasanter and quite as profitable to turn to his *Book of Hours* with its miniatures (now at Chantilly). In one picture you will see him, in blue brocade and furry cap, seated at a table covered with dainties, while his major-domo summons his favorite guests, artists or lovers of art — perhaps André Beauneveu, the distinguished sculptor from Valenciennes, who not only carved royal tombs at Saint Denis, but decorated psalters as well; and Jean de Rupi, who was to model the duc de Berry's tomb at Bourges; perhaps Pol de Limbourg, the miniature painter. It would be pleasant, too, to loiter in the great hall of his ducal palace at Poitiers, where sculptured chimneys and elegant balustrades herald the Renaissance. And one likes to think of the Duke sauntering about Bourges, wondering at the cathedral, gazing at its great north tower without and at its glorious glass within, or in the streets of Rouen, admiring the belfry tower of the great clock, and the beautiful church of Saint-Ouen, and speculating on the course of architecture from the

early severity of the twelfth century to the flamboyant style of the fifteenth — how it had shifted its attention from problems of thrust and buttress to those of ornament.

The Duke of Burgundy, Philippe le Hardi, was also a patron of the arts; but one feels that with him art was merely a handmaid to politics, for he wished to decorate and adorn the kingdom he was aiming to build up out of his far-reaching possessions, Burgundy, Franche-Comté, and Flanders. His capital, Dijon, became the headquarters of the chief school of sculpture since the ateliers of the great Gothic cathedrals. Just outside Dijon, at the chartreuse de Champmol, the Dutchman Claus Sluter (*d.* 1405), his nephew Claus de Werve, and their pupils carved their most famous work. It was originally a Calvary, with Christ crucified, with Mary and Mary Magdalene and John, but these are now gone, and only the Hebrew prophets round its base remain — the horned and bearded Moses, David, Jeremiah, Isaiah, and so on. Philippe wished his abbey to rival Saint-Denis, and this bold Dutch sculptor did his best; he combined force with dexterity, if not with beauty. Later, a tomb to Philippe le Hardi also was put up in the abbey, his effigy lying at length, with a lion at his feet and two young angels guarding his head, and little statues of mourners round about the base. One must remember this patronage of art when one grows indignant with Philippe le Hardi for his politics.

The King's brother, Louis, duc d'Orléans, was a charming, cultivated, ambitious, extravagant prince, much beloved by the King, who in moments of lucidity lavished gifts upon him. He liked hunting, tennis, cards, chess, and miniatures, but the art in which he was chiefly interested was the art of dress, in which he was a past master. He also enjoyed gay society and poetry, and was one of the officers of *La Cour Amoureuse*, an association like the

Courts of Love of the troubadours, over which presided a Prince of the Court of Love, aided by three Grand Conservators, subordinate conservators, twenty-four cavaliers of rhetoric and poetry, and a retinue of lesser officials, with the rule that there should be no theme other than the praise of ladies. Alain Chartier, the poet, as we shall see, ran a risk of punishment with his ballad, *La Belle Dame sans merci*.

Louis d'Orléans also built the great castle of Pierrefonds, ten miles from Compiègne, with its donjon, its walls twenty feet thick, its towers, its chapels, halls, galleries, and battlements, *moult fort deffensable et bien garny et remply de toutes choses appartenant à la guerre*, the most interesting mediæval fortress after Carcassonne in France. He is chiefly remembered, however, for his quarrel with his uncle of Burgundy. Rivalry between them swelled to jealousy and hate. They always took opposite sides on questions of policy. The quarrel became a feud, and grew worse when Philippe le Hardi died and his son Jean sans Peur succeeded to the dukedom. In face of a renewal of the war with England (1405), the cousins affected reconciliation, and each vowed to do doughty deeds against the national foe: Jean was going to capture Calais, Louis was to take Bordeaux. These were empty vaunts, and mutual anger flared up again. There was a second mock reconciliation *en se baisant l'un et l'autre avec larmes de joie*, for it was obvious that France would be lost if these two great lords came to blows while England was big with menace. But this hypocritical reconciliation merely led to the crisis. It would have been well for France if Jean sans Peur had stayed at Dijon to superintend his father's tomb, and Louis d'Orléans had ridden across the drawbridge and dropped the portcullis behind him at Pierrefonds.

On November 23, 1407, the Duke of Orléans, then in Paris, received a request to repair to the King immediately; it was the very day that the Queen was delivered of her twelfth child. The Duke mounted a mule and started off, with a couple of link-bearers and two squires on horseback, singing as he went and swinging a glove. He outstripped his escort. Six or eight men, their faces hidden, rushed upon him and struck him down. He was left dead. An investigation was held, and seemed on the way to discovery. At this Jean sans Peur took the duc de Berry apart and said that "by the Devil's instigation he had done it." He left Paris at a gallop. Nobody knew just what to do. The people seemed glad, for the Duke of Orléans stood in their eyes for taxation. Then there was horror at the thought of civil war. The King, when lucid, wavered between punishment and pardon. The murdered Duke's son, young Charles, the poet, made a great show of forgiveness and of reconciliation. But it was of no avail. Both parties prepared for civil war, and both solicited aid from England. The Burgundians bid first, and were accepted at first, but then the Orléanists bid higher, and they obtained the alliance; but English help did not come, and ostensible peace was made. The Orléanist faction from this time on are called Armagnacs, because Charles of Orléans married a daughter of that Gascon house and obtained its aid. It is impossible to follow this tragical situation in its details. The Burgundians usually held Paris, where they were popular, and sometimes the person of the crazy King, but again the Armagnacs would get possession. With these two parties confronting one another, sometimes with swords drawn, and Paris insubordinate and revolutionary, there was but one thing that could make the situation worse, and that came to pass — a serious English invasion.



Henry IV died in 1414, and his son Henry V asserted a claim to the crown of France. The claim was preposterous; if Edward III had had any legal right, that right had passed to other descendants and not to the House of Lancaster. But divided France seemed to lie at England's mercy, and the fifth Harry was ready to try his luck. The glorious story as Shakespeare tells it of a heroic young man bent upon high emprise is pure romance. There, you may remember, the Archbishop of Canterbury argues to English satisfaction the King's title, and Harry bows to the call of right and duty:

Now thrive the armourers, and honour's thought  
Reigns solely in the breast of every man.  
They sell the pasture now to buy the horse,  
Following the mirror of all Christian kings,  
With winged heels, as English Mercuries.  
For now sits Expectation in the air,  
And hides a sword from hilts unto the point  
With crowns imperial, crowns, and coronets,  
Promis'd to Harry and his followers.

The English crossed the Channel and captured Harfleur. The Duke of Burgundy seems to have been facing both ways. In spite of him, an army was raised — some fifty thousand men, very similar to those that took the field at Poitiers and Crécy. They overtook the English army at Agincourt, as it was retreating to Calais. The art-loving old duc de Berry, fearful of a catastrophe, advocated avoidance of battle. His advice was not heeded, and the French attacked on October 25, 1415. Every boy has learned Henry V's speech before the battle:

This day is call'd the feast of Crispian.  
He that outlives this day, and comes safe home,  
Will stand a tip-toe when this day is named,  
And rouse him at the name of Crispian.

. . . . . Then shall our names,  
 Familiar in his mouth as household words,  
 Harry the King, Bedford, and Exeter,  
 Warwick and Talbot, Salisbury and Gloucester,  
 Be in their flowing cups freshly remembered.

The French rout was complete; seven thousand of them perished, and perhaps five hundred Englishmen. Many of the prisoners were also killed on report of a second French attack, but a number survived, including Charles d'Orléans.

This prince is one of the few bright spots in this whole period. He was taken to England and kept a prisoner there from the age of twenty-four to that of forty-nine. You remember that his mother was an Italian, Valentine Visconti; and yet the Italian lyrical poetry, which had flown so high with Petrarch, does not seem to have affected him. He must have begun to rhyme in early youth, and it is of those youthful poems, I take it, that Robert Louis Stevenson was thinking when he berated our poet; and, indeed, the early poems — ballades, rondeaux, chansons — read like themes written for some session of a *Cour amoureuse*, with their frequent introduction of *Amour*, *Dangier*, *Doux-souvenir*, *Bonne-volenté*, *Nonchaloir*, and other allegorical divinities that frequented such courts. But, then, formal sets of rhymes are mere moulds, and their artificial construction necessitates artificial sentiments. When a poem begins,

*Aux excellens et puissans en noblesse  
 Dieu Cupido et Vénus la déesse,*

you do not expect Nature to come in by door or window. It is *Amour à la mode*. But during Charles's captivity in England there is more feeling in his poetry; he was compelled to seek consolation in real emotion, and his poems

that were written then, or seem to have been written then, — for I think such dating is mainly a matter of internal evidence, — have a more genuine ring, as for instance in this *complainte* to his native land :

*France, jadis on te soulait nommer  
En tous païs, le trésor de noblesse ;  
Car un chacun pouvait en toi trouver  
Bonté, honneur, loyauté, gentillesse,  
Clergie, sens, courtoisie, proesse ;  
Tous estrangers amoient te suir  
Et maintenant voy, dont j'ay déplaisance,  
Qu'il te convient maint grief mal soutenir,  
Très créstien, franc Royaume de France.*

O France, of old in every land men were wont  
To call you the treasure house of nobleness ;  
For in you everyone could find  
Virtue, honor, loyalty, amiable words,  
Knowledge, intelligence, courtesy, and knightliness.  
All foreigners wished to copy you,  
But oh, to my displeasure, I behold  
That you must now sustain most grievous ills,  
O very Christian, noble land of France.

It was no comfort to be able to enumerate, as he did, the causes of her low estate. But by far the best of all his poems are one or two *rondeaux* :

*Le temps a laissé son manteau  
De vent, de froidure et de pluye,  
Et s'est vestu de brouderie  
De soleil luyant, cler et beau.*

*Il n'y a beste, ne oyseau,  
Qui en son jargon ne chante ou crie ;  
Le temps a laissé son manteau  
De vent, de froidure et de pluye.*

*Rivière, fontaine et ruisseau  
 Portent, en livrée jolie  
 Gouttes d'argent et d'orfaverie;  
 Chascun s'abille de nouveau.  
 Le temps a laissé son manteau.*

Or that other, —

*Alez-vous en, allez, allez,  
 Soussi, Soing et Mérencolie!*

which seems to announce his release in 1440. He had been in prison for twenty-five years, which was hard for the grandson of a king, who had been born in a palace in a richly curtained bed, where vessels of glass adorned with precious stones glittered on the buffet, and a wheeled cradle before the fire had awaited His Royal Highness, and the astrologer had opined that he had been born in a happy hour, *felici sydere*.

But in London, and long in the Tower, a more august prisoner, James I, king of Scotland, also a poet, was imprisoned at that very time, for eighteen years. And perhaps Charles d'Orléans was better off than if he had been in France. Things there were indeed in an evil plight; the Armagnacs had got possession of the King, and roughly handled the Burgundian partisans in Paris. Jean sans Peur secretly acknowledged the English king's claim to the throne, and Henry V, who had gone back to England after Agincourt, returned and overran Normandy (1417). Jean sans Peur advanced on Paris, the gates were opened by treachery, and the Burgundian army entered. At this the mob rose up, for the Armagnacs were unpopular in the city, and there was again one of those terrible butcheries that seem to take place in Paris as a place of predilection — *la ville sanguinaire et meurtrière entre toutes celles du monde*, as Théodore de Bèze called it. Every Armagnac was slaughtered.

The situation, then, was this: Henry V held Normandy, Jean sans Peur held Paris, but hesitated to deliver it up to the English, while the Dauphin, who had now assumed the regency, and become of necessity a party leader of the Armagnacs, exercised his royal authority over the only loyal provinces, Touraine, Poitou, and Auvergne. Languedoc followed Burgundy. None of the three rivals felt strong enough to dominate, and there were attempts at negotiation and a peaceable settlement. But Henry V was very high in his demands, and Jean sans Peur, though said to be "as obstinate as a deaf donkey," turned about and swore everlasting friendship with the Dauphin. Paris was delighted, and chanted à *Te Deum*. But Paris deceived herself. Dauphin and Duke distrusted one another, and there were those that remembered how the Dauphin's uncle had been murdered by the Duke. Besides, the English were within a day's march of Paris, and who could tell but that Jean sans Peur meant to kidnap the Dauphin and hand him over to the English. In one of their efforts at an understanding the two met on a bridge crossing the Seine, fifty miles above Paris, at Montereau. The conversation became heated, bitter words were said, and hands laid on swords. The Dauphin accused the Duke of falsity and went off. A few moments later the Duke was attacked and killed. It was but twelve years since the first murder had caused civil war, and now this second murder well-nigh brought France to ruin. The Burgundians believed that the murder was premeditated, and the murdered Duke's son, Philippe le Bon, made common cause with the English. They induced the crazy King to submit to the treaty of Troyes, by which he was to hold the crown for life, and Henry V was to marry his daughter Katherine and succeed him as king of France (1420).



The only hope for "the treasure house of nobleness," as Charles d'Orléans called the kingdom of France, lay in the Dauphin, who was then seventeen years old; but that hope seemed no stronger than a broken reed. He had been denied all rights in the kingdom, and, worse, he had been stigmatized by his own father and mother as *le soi-disant dauphin*, as though he were a bastard, and because he held neither Paris nor any city north of the Loire except Orléans he was styled in mockery *le roi de Bourges*. But the French national sentiment had various sources of strength. Languedoc swung away from the Burgundian party and sided with the Dauphin, and his army, thanks to the valor of the Scotch archers, won a victory over the English at Beaugé, and someone — John Kirkmichael, according to the Scottish version, or Gilbert de la Fayette, according to the French — killed the Duke of Clarence (1421); nevertheless no one could doubt that the issue between the vigorous, austere, hard-hitting, honest English king and the languid, undernourished, indolent Dauphin would soon be settled. But Henry died (August 31, 1422), and two months later his father-in-law, the crazy Charles VI; the Dauphin's rival, a baby, scarce a year old, was proclaimed Henry VI, *par la grâce de Dieu roi de France et d'Angleterre*. The *roi de Bourges* assumed the title of Charles VII.

## XI

### JOAN OF ARC

FRANCE was now divided into halves, with two kings claiming the sovereignty of the whole. The Duke of Bedford was governing at Paris in the name of his nephew Henry VI, poor baby happily ignorant of his own tragic future. Charles VII held his court at Bourges. He was a weak, poor-spirited lad of nineteen, a helpless tool in the hands of self-seeking counselors. Favorites intrigued and quarreled to determine who should control him and receive the prodigal gifts that he scattered heedlessly. You may see his portrait, at a later age, by Jean Fouquet, in the Louvre; it is a sorry image for the king of a great country. The face, with its little eyes, long nose, and thick lips, dull, sensual, vulgar, and pathetic, has a look of dogged suspiciousness, which was but too well justified. You can still see in his face, I think, a trace of that cruel doubt, instilled by his own parents, as to his legitimacy, the "King's secret" that gnawed at his young heart.

There was reason enough for downcast looks. The English held Normandy, Picardie, Champagne, and Paris, while Burgundian soldiers camped in Maine and Anjou; and wherever English or Burgundians went, devastation and misery followed at their heels. Charles, or rather his counselors, contrived to get together an army of fourteen thousand men, and marched into Normandy to fight the English under the Duke of Bedford. The English army took a good position at Verneuil, a little west of Dreux, and protected it by *chevaux-de-frise*. The French army, much more numerous, acted like a rabble, just as it had



*Fouquet*

*Louvre*

CHARLES VII



done at Crécy, Poitiers, and Agincourt; there was no discipline, no order, no coöperation between the ranks. The rout was as bad as before; the French lost seven thousand men. Fortunately for them, the Duke of Bedford was hastily called back to England by troubles there. Nevertheless, the situation was nearly desperate. Burgundy was in league with England; and the royalists, the Armagnacs, were divided among themselves, La Trémoille at the head of one faction, the Connétable Richemont of the other. But worse than shrunken boundaries and internal divisions was the loss of morale. Frenchmen were convinced that, whatever their superiority in numbers, they were unable to face an English army in the open field, and the English were equally sure that one Englishman could thrash four Frenchmen. With affairs in this situation an English army advanced and laid siege to Orléans, the only important place, north of the Loire, still loyal to France. The end of the House of Valois seemed near at hand. Then one of the most remarkable things in the history of Europe happened.

We have reached the month of February, 1429. The pitiful King was at the castle of Chinon, in Touraine, hard by the river Vienne, a few miles above where it flows into the Loire. He seems to have given up any hope of relieving Orléans. His courtiers counseled him to fly far away, to Dauphiné, to Castile, to Scotland even. The dreadful suspicion that he was not the lawful king, not the son of Charles VI, that his was an unjust cause and Heaven would not prosper it, must have become stronger and stronger. On February 23 it was announced that a peasant girl had come all the way from Domremy, a little village on the borders of Lorraine, a visionary, who wished to see him. Visionaries were no new things, and another one did not arouse any keen interest. Here was a girl of



seventeen or eighteen, dressed like a man, robust, with brown hair, Jeanne d'Arc by name, who, like the others, said that she had a divine mission to fulfill. She had heard Voices that had bidden her leave her father and mother, leave her friends and playmates, because God had chosen her to drive the English from Orléans and conduct the Dauphin (for he could not be considered king until he was crowned) to Reims for his coronation. It had been very hard for her to accomplish her long journey, for others had not shared her confidence in the divine character of her mission; but believers had been found, and brave young men had escorted her through hostile country from Domremy to Chinon.

The King's counselors hesitated. Fanatics with missions might come from the Devil. But the girl brought strong testimonials, and, after being watched for two days, was judged not dangerous. She was admitted in the evening into the great hall of the castle. Walls, a stone floor, and some scanty ruins mark the spot. The hall, lighted by fifty torches, was crowded, but the girl went directly to the King. To test her, the suspicious King took her aside and asked her many questions; among her answers, she said, "I say to you on the part of Our Lord that you are the true heir of France and son of the King, and He sends me to you to lead you to Reims that there you may be crowned and anointed, if you will." The King turned to those about him and said that Jeanne had told him a certain secret that nobody knew, nor could know, except God.

The poor spiritless King was greatly comforted, but his counselors were cautious. Investigators were sent to Domremy, and she was taken to Poitiers, where she lodged in the Hôtel de la Rose, near the cathedral. At Poitiers she was cross-questioned for two weeks by masters

in theology, perhaps in the very hall of the ducal palace in which the Duke de Berry had built his famous fireplaces. One of the examiners, who came from Limoges and spoke a Limousin patois, asked her in what language the Voices, Sainte Catherine and Sainte Marguerite, had spoken to her. "In a better than yours," she answered. She came out well; and the theologians certified to her *humilité*, *virginité*, *dévotion*, *honnêteté*, *simplesse*. On her return to Chinon she was given a suit of armor, and an army was raised for the relief of Orléans.

The young Duke d'Alençon, of the blood royal, two distinguished guerrilla chiefs, La Hire and Saintrailles, and other leaders, joined the expedition. Jeanne's banner was white, with an image of God blessing the fleur-de-lis, and bore the words "Jesus, Mary." It does not appear that she had the actual command, but was rather a sort of guardian spirit to whom the leaders looked for inspiration and supernatural counsel. On April 28 the army left Blois for Orléans, a march of thirty-five miles. The main part of that city lay to the north of the river, with a suburb to the south connected by a bridge. The English army, under the Earls of Suffolk and Talbot, was not large, not more than three thousand men, but well armed, well trained, and full of confidence bred of continuous victories. They invested the city, built forts, — *bastilles*, as they were called, — roundabout, with connecting barricades in some places, and had captured the suburb to the south of the river together with the bastille there, known as Les Tourelles, but they had neglected to erect any defenses in the direction of Paris, as they did not expect any attack in that quarter. So when the French army of relief marched along the south bank of the Loire to a point beyond Orléans, although the main body was unable to cross and fell back, Jeanne with two hundred

lances rowed over to the north bank and in the night entered Orléans from the direction of Paris (April 29). The citizens were overjoyed; men, women, and children were convinced that she had been sent by God to deliver them.

On May 4 the army of relief under Dunois, bastard brother to Charles of Orléans, returned and entered the city unopposed, for the English were too few both to man their forts and to take the field. The French leaders that same day attacked a bastille called Saint-Loup, Jeanne bearing her white banner, and carried it by assault. On May 6 they captured a second. On the seventh they proposed to rest and await reënforcements, but Jeanne, moved by divine inspiration, or by common sense, insisted on attacking the strong bastille Les Tourelles on the south bank of the river. The captains sent her word that they deemed it best to wait. She replied: "*Vous avez été dans votre conseil, et moi dans le mien; votre dessein va périr, celui de mon seigneur tiendra ferme et sera exécuté.* (You follow your lights; I follow mine. Your plan will fail; the plan the Lord gives me will prevail and be performed.)" Go she would. You remember that there had been a bridge connecting the city with the south bank; this the English had broken when they captured Les Tourelles, and at the time it was impassible; but when, before starting, her host brought her a fish for breakfast, she answered: "Keep it for supper, for I shall bring back a Goddam (for so they called the English) to share it, and I shall come back across the bridge."

Jeanne had her way and the assault was made. The French planted their ladders in many places and demeaned themselves with *vaillance et hardiesse*; nevertheless, the English hurled them back and showed *à leur hardi maintien que ils cuidassent estre immortels*, that they deemed themselves invulnerable. Jeanne urged her men on: "*Ne vous*

*doutez la place est à nous*”; but the French were discouraged, and Dunois gave orders to retire. Jeanne was wounded, but bade Dunois wait for a few minutes; then she withdrew apart and prayed, and, coming back, advanced to the edge of the moat. *Les Anglais furent effrayés et la peur les envahit*. She called to the French: “Wait till the tip of my banner touches the wall!” Somebody shouted: “It touches, it touches!” And she gave the word: “*Alors, entrez, tout est à nous!* (Come on, the place is ours!)” The French charged and carried all before them. Someone reported afterwards: “At her words we mounted the battlement as if it were a stair.” Jeanne came upon one of the English captains who had answered her summons to surrender with insulting messages: “*Glasdale, rends toi, rends toi — au nom du Roi du ciel! Tu m’as appelée prostituée, mais j’ai grande pitié de ton âme et de celles des tiens*. (Surrender, Glasdale, in the name of the King of Heaven. You called me a strumpet, but I have compassion on your soul and on the souls of your soldiers.)” Jeanne had the bridge mended, and crossed upon it. The English raised the siege. Among those captured in one of the forts were some English soldiers who had looted priests’ garments, chasubles, copes and stoles; she saved their lives, calling to the French that were about to take vengeance, “*On ne doit rien demander aux gens d’église*. (Men in priests’ garments are not to be touched.)”

The victory had an immense moral effect; Jeanne became a heroine of legend. The Duke of Bedford wrote to Henry VI: “The disaster was due, in my opinion, in great part to the foolish fear and crazy ideas inspired in our soldiers by a hound of Hell, La Pucelle, who practised sorcery upon them.” At a single blow the English prestige had been broken; on June 12 they were beaten at Jargeau,

and Suffolk was taken prisoner; on the eighteenth they were again beaten at Patay, and Talbot captured. An Italian wrote: "This is the most marvelous thing that has happened in five hundred years, or ever will happen. . . . The English fall dead on the ground before her." Then Jeanne turned her face to Reims, and there, on July 17, Charles VII was solemnly anointed and crowned King of France. Jeanne fell on her knees before him: "*Gentil roy, ore est executé le plaisir de Dieu, qui voulait que vinssiez à Reims recevoir votre digne sacre, en monstrant que vous êtes vray roy, et celui auquel le royaume doit appartenir.* (Gentle King, the will of God is now fulfilled, for He wished you to come to Reims for consecration, and so to show that you are the true King and that the kingdom rightfully belongs to you.)"

Within a year the wonderful story closes. Jeanne was captured by the Burgundians. Probably she might have been ransomed. The miserable King did nothing, and his counselors were relieved to be rid of her. The Burgundians sold her to the English, who brought her to trial on the charge of heresy. Pierre Cauchon (a name that has given much comfort to his critics), bishop of Beauvais, by right of the inquisitional powers appertaining to his episcopal jurisdiction, presided at the trial, although it took place at Rouen (1431). It is impossible not to feel a passionate contempt and hate for Cauchon and for all who took part in Jeanne's condemnation; but it must be remembered that people then believed in the existence of sorcery as absolutely as we believe in the existence of disease, and that the English were honestly convinced, and Cauchon too, that Jeanne was a witch. There was, of course, nothing fair in the trial; it was conducted after the most bigoted manner of the mediæval inquisition. Scholars say that her defense was marvelous. To her





*By Burton Holmes from Ewing Galloway*

REIMS CATHEDRAL



judges it was but a proof the more of the Devil's help. They asked her, in their grossness, if Saint Michael was naked when he appeared to her. She answered: "Do you not think that God had wherewithal to clothe him?" They charged her with disrespect to the Church. "I come," she said, "to the King of France from God, from the Holy Virgin Mary, from all the saints in Paradise, and from the Church Triumphant on high, and by their command; and to that Church I submit all that I have done, all that I may do." At last, worn out by questionings, taken to a graveyard, shouted at, vilified, menaced with torture, confronting the stake, she gave way, and confessed the truth of all the witchcraft that they charged her with. But such a confession could only be punished by imprisonment for life, and that was not what the English wanted; they were furious. Four days later she withdrew her confession. By that act she became, under inquisitional law, a relapse, and for this the punishment was to be burned at the stake, as heretic, apostate, and idolater. Two days later, on May 30, 1431, she was led to the stake. As the flames rose, she cried aloud that her Voices came from God. A generation later, in 1456, after the French had reconquered Normandy, a new trial was held and the judgment of condemnation was set aside. In our own day the Roman Catholic Church, recognizing this most beautiful and miraculous career, has canonized her, and one may suspect that in the communion of Saints there was a thrill of joy when Saint Joan entered among them. And, if one may venture a less ecclesiastical judgment, Jeanne d'Arc and the Cathedral of Chartres are the two noblest manifestations of the French spirit.

"As when a well-graced actor leaves the stage," so after Jeanne's death French history loses its interest. Bur-

gundy made her peace with France and promised to forget the murder of Jean sans Peur, but England continued the war, furious, after untold victories, to be knocked about by a despised foe. The old evil of disbanded and struggling soldiers again infested the country, called *Écorcheurs*, because they skinned everybody. The country was picked to the bare bones. These ruffians protested that they had no other means of getting a livelihood. "*Si Dieu le Père se faisoit gendarme,*" one of them said, "*il deviendrait pillard.*" Paint the picture as black as you can. The population dwindled pitifully. But time and the hour run through the longest day. Normandy was won back, Guyenne also, and the half-century was hardly out before England, of all her French possessions owned by Plantagenets or Dukes of Normandy, had nothing left but the City of Calais.

## XII

### CHARLES VII, LOUIS XI (1422-1483)

THE reigns of Charles VII (1422-1461) and of his son Louis XI (1461-1483) extend over two generations. During that period the dominating policy of the crown remained the same — to establish its authority over the great feudatories within the kingdom; but the circumstances of the two reigns were so different that the policy looks as if it had changed, though it did not. During the reign of Charles VII, it happened that the great provinces of the west were in the hands of the king of England, and therefore the entrance of England into the struggle gave it an international character; during the reign of Louis XI, the struggle was to the east, with the great duchy of Burgundy, and that also wears an international appearance; but in fact the crown of France, in the two cases, sought to assert its sovereignty from the Rhine to the Atlantic.

During the period after Jeanne d'Arc's death, the story of France is bleak. But toward the middle of the century there were bright spaces, for the King seemed to change his character, or at least to follow more energetic and wiser counselors; and both in the dark times and the bright there were interesting people. Let us take notice of some of these. There is the poet Alain Chartier (*circa* 1390-1455), who was freely employed in affairs of State, once on an embassy to the Emperor for help against England, and once to King James of Scotland, and remained away for ten years. He represents the spirit of patriotism that seems to have been quickened in France as a national sentiment when the foreigner Henry V claimed the crown.



Alain depicts France as denouncing her recreant sons: "*O hommes forvoyez du chemin de bonne congnoissance, femenins de couraiges et de meurs, loingtains de vertus, forlignez de la constance de voz peres, qui pour delicieusement vivre, choisissez à mourir sans honneur!*" (Ye men, strayed from the true path, womanish in courage, womanish in ways, loitering far from valor, disinherited of your fathers' steadfastness, men who in order to live in luxurious ease are ready to die dishonored!) " And in his long poem, *Le Livre des quatre dames*, when four widowed, or forsaken, ladies bewail after Agincourt their several plights, one lover killed, one taken prisoner, one not heard from, and one that has run away, there is no doubt that in the poet's mind it is the last whose lot is the most tragic. But Alain Chartier had his light moments, and wrote *rondeaux*, *ballades*, a *pastourelle*, as well as the *Lay de la Belle Dame sans merci*, to which I alluded:

*Mal jour pour moy adiourne,  
Madame, quant ie vous vis oncques.*

*Ie seuffre mal ardent et chault  
Dont je meurs par vous bien vouloir  
Et ie voy qu'il ne vous en chault  
Et navez dy penser vouloir.*

By which he means that it was an evil day when he first met his lady, and that he is dying from passionate love of her, and that she is quite unconcerned. It was for imputing this callousness to a lady that, as I understand it, he laid himself open to blame from the Court of Love.

Another interesting person is a lady, who is believed to have been full of patriotic feeling, and to have lifted the King out of sensuality and lethargy and given him spirit to continue the redemption of France. François I wrote this quatrain upon her:

*Gentille Agnez, plus de los tu merite,  
La cause etant de France recouvrer,  
Que tout ce que en cloitre peut ouvrir  
Close nonnain ui en desert hermite.*

Sweet Agnes, you deserve more praise,  
The cause being to redeem our France,  
Than all a cloistered nun could do,  
Or hermit in his desert cell.

This lady is Agnes Sorel, a native of Touraine, of very great beauty, who maintained her dominion over the King for nearly twenty years. She was the first, and perhaps the best, of those ladies who held an acknowledged position in the royal establishment, and of whom Madame du Barry was the last. Agnes Sorel is associated with the Castle of Chinon, in the valley of the Loire, where Jeanne d'Arc first saw the King; it is said that there was a subterranean passage that led from the royal Tour d'Argenton to the Maison Roberdau outside the castle walls, where she lived. From her time on, the Loire country becomes associated with the leisure of French kings, with their huntings and their wooings, but no feminine presence comes again as charming as hers. Agnes also resided frequently in the grim castle of Loches, on the river Indre, about thirty-five miles to the east, much of which was built in the reign of Charles VII. She died in the abbey of Jumièges (1450), not without suspicion of poison, with which the name of the rebellious Dauphin has been coupled, perhaps unjustly, but her body was carried to Loches, and buried in the church hard by the castle. A tomb erected there presents her lovely effigy, recumbent upon a marble base, and guarded by two angels. Not very much is known of this beautiful lady beyond the criticisms of disagreeing chroniclers, and a few letters. I give some extracts that show a tender or

a pious heart: "The gentlemen had gone hunting a wild boar near Chinon, and a little hound named Robin had joined in the chase, and by mistake was badly wounded by a huntsman!" "My greyhound, Carpet, would not heed voice or whistle, so I sent him to a friend to be taken care of." "Mathelin Tiery, the father of one of the young women of my household, found his income so diminished by the war that he was in abject poverty, and I hoped that the King's chamberlain could find him employment." "A man, said to be a ruffian, who was acquainted with one of the servants, got into the château by night and pried open a coffer and stole a reliquary, but in trying to cross the moat he fell in and was captured, and it is reported that this was due to the relics."

It is said that Jean Fouquet, the great miniature painter (1415-1480), painted her face for a Madonna in a church picture, but this is doubted. Yet it might be so, since Étienne Chevalier, one of the King's courtiers, for whom Fouquet painted his famous miniatures in a Book of Hours, was the official to put up her tomb. Fouquet was a court painter both to Charles VII and to Louis XI. He painted the portrait of Charles VII to which I have referred probably after the death of Agnes Sorel, for his face looks as if he had gone back to his grosser life. He also painted the Chancellor Jovenel des Ursins. In this last portrait is an interesting detail of Italian pilasters in the background, which gives a hint that a new artistic influence will soon be coming to combat and supersede the Flemish influences that still dominate, not merely in Burgundy, but, as we see by Fouquet, in Touraine as well. Fouquet was the earliest French painter (so far as I know) to make the journey to Rome. And this journey carries its contribution of general history, for it tends to show that roads were safe again, that bandits had been sup-

pressed. This comparative safety for wayfarers was due to the establishment of a regular army of paid soldiers, who policed the roads with considerable success.

But there is better proof than Fouquet's voyage to Rome of the immense increase in order and security in the country, and that is the business career of Jacques Cœur, known to all visitors to Bourges by his celebrated *hôtel*. This palace, so richly decorated, with its tourelles, its dormer windows, its engaged balustrades, proclaims somewhat after the fashion of Charles d'Orléans's poem, *Le temps a laissié son manteau*, that the winter of war and brigandage is over and the spring of peace and order is come. Jacques Cœur was an extraordinary man, gifted with aptitudes for great mercantile affairs. He was born at Bourges about 1395, his father being a rich merchant. He married at twenty-three, and at thirty-two, shortly before the siege of Orléans, he was one of several to undertake to coin the King's money. These coiners gave light weight, as they admitted. This was an odd way to begin those services to his country which his admirers claim were second only to those of Jeanne d'Arc. The King pardoned this felony, and Jacques Cœur started with abounding energy to repair his fortunes. In 1432, the year after Joan was burned at the stake, and just at the time when the King was courting Agnes Sorel, and while Alain Chartier was in exile, Jacques Cœur was at Damascus, mixing with all sorts of merchants there, French, Venetian, Genoese, Florentine, and Catalan, studying the whole problem of commerce with the East. He adopted for his device, "*À vaillants cœurs rien impossible*." He took the lead in this oriental trade, opened mercantile houses at Montpellier and Marseilles, and sent his ships to Alexandria and Beyrouth, carrying merchandise to and fro. Then he became a manufacturer, and founded establishments at

Perpignan, Tours, Bourges, and many other French cities; he owned and exploited mines; he operated salt works, a dyeing mill here, a paper-making factory there, and so on. Everything prospered in his hands, and he became a great financial power. He put life into French industry at home, won great prestige for France in all the Mediterranean, and lent the King the money necessary to complete the expulsion of the English in the final period of the Hundred Years' War.

No doubt, with peace, there would have been an immediate outburst of industry and commerce, but Jacques Cœur was already at work, and like sunshine and showers in early April quickened the crop. He performed various functions for the King, became very rich, and acquired great estates all over the kingdom. He also found places for his family. He secured for his brother the bishopric of Luçon, in the Vendée, and the archbishopric of Bourges for his son; and married his womenfolk, sister, niece, and daughter, extremely well. In short, he was, if not the richest, one of the richest men in Europe, and the chief of the non-noble counselors of the King. He rode side by side with the King's favorite, Pierre de Brézé, and with Dunois, the famous soldier.

Like some other great captains of industry, Jacques Cœur pushed his way to fortune roughly, shoving rivals to one side and trampling others down; and he did many a violent act. But remember it was not long since that the *Écorcheurs* had been roaming about, and high-handedness was the fashion. The years of glory did not last very long. Envy and jealousy, *les hayneux et malveillans*, surrounded him; many nobles, even the Queen herself, owed him money. In 1451 he was arrested. There were legitimate charges enough, but his enemies, in their bitterness, accused him of poisoning Agnes Sorel. The charge of



poison failed. Many others were speedily brought up: he had sold arms to the infidels; he had given up a Christian to them; he had cheated the King. He was condemned, his property confiscated, and himself exiled. He died in Rome in 1456.

The fourth person of celebrity in this middle period of the fifteenth century of whom I shall speak was born in Paris at about the time that Charles VII was wooing Agnes Sorel and Jacques Cœur was setting out on his voyage of exploration in the orient. His name by birth was François de Montcorbier, but he took the surname of a benefactor, *mon plus que père*, Guillaume de Villon, a chaplain, who brought him up in respectable society and sent him to the University of Paris, and so he became François Villon. At twenty-one he was graduated. By this time he seems to have got into very bad company. Probably the fact that there was this bad company ready to receive him was due in great part to the wars. All over France there were still a lot of vagabonds, not brigands, but fellows occupying a position intermediate between brigands and honest folk, ex-soldiers, peddlers, beggars, gypsies, petty thieves, who frequented the fairs that were held in Champagne or Poitou and lived by their wits — *les gueux*, as they are generally called. They spoke a *jargon* of their own — thieves' slang, we should call it. Many of them drifted to Paris, and naturally betook themselves to the Latin quarter, on the south bank of the Seine, where students lived. One such band were called *Coquillarts*, and two of these reprobates, Regnier de Montigny and Colin des Cayeux, became intimate friends of François Villon.

*Facilis est descensus.* First we hear of a tavern, the Pomme de Pin, and of La Grosse Margot, a person of what is called questionable character, of Blanche la Savetiere,

of the gentle Saulciciere, skilled in the dance, of Jehanneton la Chapperonniere, of Katherine la Bourciere, and so on. There is also mention of a fashionable tavern kept by Robin Turgis, but Villon was not free to go there often, for he does not seem to have paid his reckoning. The first disorders came even before François Villon got his degree. Three years later, in a brawl, he killed a priest (1455). For this he managed to get a pardon; but immediately took part in a burglary at the Collège de Navarre. After that he found it prudent to leave Paris. For some other act he seems to have been condemned to death by a tribunal of Charles, duc d'Orléans, the poet; but by lucky chance a daughter was born to the Duke at this time, and Villon took advantage of the auspicious occasion to compliment the Duke:

*O louee conception  
Envoïee ça jus des cieulx  
Du noble lis digne syon . . .*

O laudable conception,  
Worthy scion of the noble lily,  
Sent down from Heaven . . .

This poem of slenderest merit procured his release, and Villon seems to have become a member of the ducal household for a time. It is an odd confrontation, this meeting of the princely poet of artificial love and palace life and the sneak thief and burglar of genius who had listened to the base notes of the "still, sad music of humanity." The stay at the Duke's palace was not for long, and then we find Villon in prison in Meung; it made him think of Jean de Meung:

*Et comme le noble Rommant  
De la Rose dit et confesse  
En son premier commencement*

*Qu'on doit jeun cuer en jeunesse,  
Quant on le voit viel en viellesse,  
Excuser, hélas! il dit voir:*

And as the noble *Roman*  
*De la Rose* says and asserts  
At its beginning:  
Where one sees the heart old in age  
One should excuse the young heart  
For being young in youth.  
Alas! it speaks true.

By good luck, the young king, Louis XI, fresh from his coronation at Reims (1461), came by scattering pardons, and Villon was set free. The story is sad — more robbery, more imprisonment, more street brawling, and a sentence *à estre pendu et estranglé*. It was then that he wrote the *Ballade des pendus*.

*La pluye nous a debuez et lavez,  
Et le soleil dessechiez et noircis;  
Pies, corbeaulx, nous ont les yeux cavez,  
Et arrachié la barbe et les sourcis.*

The rain has washed the dirt away,  
The sun has dried and blackened us,  
Pies, crows, have pecked out our eyes,  
Plucked out eyebrows and beard.

But he appealed, and the sentence of death was commuted to banishment. After this Villon disappears, leaving behind him some immortal verses, the beatings of a heart that had been purified from the grossness of its familiar thoughts by pondering on the grim facts of old age, death, and oblivion. His long poem *Le Testament*, his testamentary dispositions, contains the *Ballade des dames du temps jadis*, with its Shakespearian line,

*Mais où sont les neiges d'antan ?*

Where are the snows of yesteryear ?

Also, *Les regrets de la belle Heaulmière* :

*"Ainsi le bon temps regrettons*

*Entre nous, pauvres vieilles sotes . . .*

And the *Ballade des femmes de Paris*, with its well-known line,

*Il n'est bon bec que de Paris.*

These ballads are a greater legacy than Jacques Cœur's house at Bourges, or the memory of Agnes Sorel's beautiful face, used by indirection for good. And with a feeling that Villon has told us much truth about life in the fifteenth century, we pass on to the man who came into the lives of all three — Louis XI. This renowned monarch had not been a dutiful son. He was very ambitious for independence and power ; at sixteen he rebelled against his father, who banished him to Dauphiné ; it was owing to Louis's resentment that he was suspected of being privy to the supposed poisoning of Agnes Sorel. He plotted and rebelled again and again ; once Jacques Cœur was thought to be implicated. Finally the Dauphin was so fearful of his father's righteous anger that he fled to the court of Philippe le Bon, Duke of Burgundy, and remained in Flanders till his father's death.

At last the wished-for day came. The mean-looking, spindle-shanked man, with a long shapeless nose and sparkling little eyes, was crowned at Reims, and after a brief visit to Paris went to live at the Château of Amboise, between Blois and Tours, and then in his new castle of Plessis, just outside Tours.

This pleasant land of Touraine, with the Loire gliding through in courtly fashion, attended by its tributary

streams, Indre, Vienne, and Loir, had now become, if not yet the playground, at least the dwelling place, of the kings of France. Already, as I have said, Charles VII and the beautiful Agnes Sorel had lived at Loches, and now Loches had given place to Plessis-lès-Tours. Louis XI, however, did not stay quiet for long at a time; he traveled about, riding his mule, or down the rivers by boat, to make himself acquainted with his people, the burghers of his *bonnes villes*, or, it might be, with peasants, for he had simple tastes and disliked tournaments, balls, banquets, ceremony. When he went into Tours he would dine at the sign of Saint Martin in the market place, or with some family in the city, where he was often outrageously gay and grossly free-spoken. He liked good wine, and was an interminable talker. One extravagant taste he had, hunting, and he expended large sums on his hounds and hawks. But his real passion was politics, and he passed most of his time spinning spider webs of perfidious plans. Charles the Bold dubbed him *l'universelle araignée*. In private life he was detestable. His first wife, a Scottish princess, whom he married when she was but thirteen years old, died at twenty-one, a frail girl given to poetry. It is said that once she came upon Alain Chartier fast asleep, and kissed his mouth. Her maidens cried out, for the poet was a very ugly man. She replied, "I did not kiss the man, but the golden words that issue from his lips." Her life was made miserable by her husband. When she died she said: "*Fi de la vie de ce monde! Ne m'en parlez plus.*" One other trait was as marked — his religion; he neglected no means to secure the help of heavenly powers; he prayed, he bribed, he went on pilgrimages. But the reader will know his character from *Quentin Durward*, and from melodramatic drama, for which he is a goodly hero. Only this must be emphasized; he regarded France as his very self,



and his unintermitted efforts for self-aggrandizement were equally for France. Not even Henri IV was a better king.

Louis XI was vindictive, but shrewd, and after a brief period of vengeance he restored to office most of his father's old counselors, among them Guillaume Jouvenel des Ursins, whose portrait by Jean Fouquet, to which I have referred, hangs in the Louvre. But those who impressed themselves on the popular imagination were usually men of his own choosing. Tristan Lermite, to be sure, who had charge of political trials, had exercised similar functions under his father; but there is Olivier le Daim, the barber, who played the spy and did such of the King's dirty work as he did not do himself. There is Philippe de Commines, of Flemish birth, who was godson to Duke Philippe le Bon, and had been in attendance on Philippe's son, Charles the Bold, but had deserted Burgundy for France, and who by his *Chronique de Louis XI* has secured a place in French literature beside Villehardouin and Joinville — not for his style, perhaps, so much as for his intelligent conception of the sequence of events that constitute history.

The King had need of all sorts of counselors, and preferred those innocent of scruples. His task, as I have said, was the continuation of the old policy of subjecting the great feudatories to the royal yoke and making all French territory into one kingdom. No king of France carried on that policy better than he. The great nobles had no mind to be obedient, the duc de Bretagne, the duc d'Alençon, the duc de Berry, but the problem was incarnate in Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy. That prince, a little man with blue eyes, brown beard, and a shock of black hair, robust, laborious, abstemious, and pious, was also haughty, choleric, and ambitious. He and Louis XI

were of necessity enemies. Both employed craft, treachery, lies, deceit, ruse, and rotten policy. *Quentin Durward* and *Anne of Geierstein* tell all that one needs to know of this history. Louis XI did one rash thing. Thinking that in an encounter of wits he would come out on top, he asked for a safe-conduct and paid a visit to the Duke of Burgundy, at Peronne. While he was there, the city of Liège in Flanders revolted from the Duke's allegiance. Numerous witnesses, not incorrectly, said that Louis had stirred up the revolt. The Burgundians were furious; some of the Duke's advisers wished to keep the King in prison, but the Duke contented himself with exacting an acceptance of his claims on all the points at issue between them, and also the King's company on his expedition of vengeance against Liège. So Louis, whose promises had stirred up the revolt, rode into the conquered town, drawn sword in hand, shouting "Hurrah for Burgundy!" and watched the city burn. You have his character there; it is unnecessary to go into further details. He violated his promises to Charles as soon as he could safely do so, and punished the enemies he could lay his hands on. He kept Cardinal Balue in mild imprisonment for eleven years, and the Bishop of Verdun in a cage; he chopped off the heads of the comte de Saint-Pol and the duc de Nemours. Fortunately for him, the Duke of Burgundy with his headstrong temper ruined himself.

The story of that ruin lies outside my limits. Charles the Bold wished to round out his dominions of Burgundy and Flanders, by adding Alsace and other territories between, and make the whole into a kingdom. Louis helped spin the web in which he was caught. The Switzers came in, made alliance with Alsace, and won the victories of Grandson (1476), Morat (1476), and finally Nancy (1477), in which the Duke was killed. So the danger to France

ended. The monarchy had overcome the centrifugal forces that had threatened to rend it asunder; the feudal system was at an end; modern France begins. Of the Burgundian dominions Louis seized Picardie, Artois, the duchy of Burgundy, and Franche-Comté; he also had annexed Provence and Roussillon, a province on the Spanish border, so that when he came to die he was able to say, "By the grace of God and the intercession of the very Blessed Virgin, His mother, we have increased the kingdom on all sides." He died, in spite of his doctors and astrologers, in spite of the ring of Saint Zenobius and the blood of turtles from the Cape Verde Islands, in spite of the prayers of Saint François de Paule, a hermit fetched to Plessis-lès-Tours from Calabria (1483). As the Dauphin, Charles VIII, was but a boy of thirteen, the affairs of the kingdom were entrusted to Louis's elder daughter, Anne de Beaujeu, and her husband.

### XIII

## THE RENAISSANCE

WE are now at the entrance of the modern world; Christopher Columbus is hawking his visions from court to court in hopes of finding means of giving them reality, and printers are beginning to change Europe's outlook upon life and alter the constitution of society. France was behind Germany in the matter of printing, as she was behind Spain and England in the matter of exploration, and it is not worth our while to pause over these subjects. For us on our tour through the centuries the most interesting event in these two following reigns, of Charles VIII (1483-1498) and of Louis XII (1498-1515), is the entrance of the gracious influences of Italy into France, and to that I shall address myself; but first there is a domestic episode that should be recounted.

Charles VIII was but a lad at his accession, and Anne de Beaujeu and her husband fulfilled their stewardship very well. The pair were clear-headed, sagacious politicians, and overreached the disorderly and disobedient princes of the blood, who resented any reign of law. Their most conspicuous success was solving the problem of Brittany. This duchy, with its Celtic population, its local traditions, its romantic and legendary literature, and its own ruling family, had always considered itself as separate and apart from the rest of France, and this opinion had been accepted by the rest of France, but now that the duchy of Burgundy had been incorporated in the monarchy it was obviously appropriate to bring in Brittany too. Duke François II and his wife died in 1488; in the cathedral at Nantes you

will see their tomb designed by Michel Colombe, the two effigies lying out at full length, a lion and a greyhound at their feet, the cardinal virtues guarding the corners, and statuettes of apostles ranged about in niches. This ducal pair left a daughter, Anne, a girl of thirteen, a prize for amorous princes. The Emperor Maximilian not only wooed her, but married her by proxy. Anne de Beaujeu would not tolerate that marriage, especially as Maximilian was in alliance both with Henry VII of England, who was trying to recover Guyenne, and with Ferdinand of Aragon, who was trying to recover Roussillon. She sent young Charles VIII to woo with an army at his back, and the lady consented. It was stipulated in the marriage contract that if Charles should die and leave her without children she should then marry his successor on the throne. The marriage took place at Langeais in the great château that stands there, as if lost in gloomy meditation, looking down on the Loire, a few miles below Tours. In this way Brittany became an integral part of the French kingdom, and the Breton ermine, as you will see on heraldic devices, took its place among the royal blazons.

Now to the main theme. The curtain rises, a new act begins, flourish of trumpets, and Italy enters upon the scene. And, as Italy comes in, the Flemish influences drop away, in part because of a wider political separation between Flanders and France, and in part because under the alien House of Hapsburg, inheritors of Charles the Bold, the Flemish creative genius dwindled and pined. The way for the entrance of Italian art is also cleared because, with the failure of the princely House of Burgundy, Burgundian art died too; almost its last bit of sculpture is the tomb of Philippe Pot, now in the Louvre. One would like to linger over these passings and transitions, and over good King René, of Provence, with his love of art, his efforts at



poetry, his patronage of Nicolas Froment, the Flemish-minded painter of Avignon, but Italy has the cue, and must enter.

In Italy the Renaissance had come as if that country had suddenly sailed out of a sea of storm and fog into warm latitudes; this was due in the main to the security of the person and the increase of wealth, with the consequent release of energy that spent itself in making life more desirable. Old theories of European polity, secular and ecclesiastical, had gone. The Emperor was shrunk to a German potentate, vainly endeavoring to impress political unity on discordant principalities from the Rhone to Poland, from the Baltic to the Alps, and the Pope was for the most part content to be a little local sovereign in central Italy, while Venice, Milan, Florence, and the kingdom of Naples bubbled with the new wine of life. In Milan the Sforza family ruled, in Florence the Medici, in Naples a branch of the House of Aragon. For two or three generations these states had maintained a sort of equilibrium, and by so doing had erected a hothouse in which the Italian mind bloomed and blossomed and brought forth fruits, forty-, sixty-, and an hundred-fold. Painting, architecture, poetry, prose, scientific studies, political theories, grew like Jack's beanstalk. Italy was the garden of Europe — so beautiful, so tempting, and so little able to defend herself.

Charles VIII, now twenty-four years old, with peace at home, and a kingdom at his back more united than it had been since the days of Charlemagne, felt himself fitted for high exploits, and turned his covetous eyes across the Alps. His courtiers told him that he had a claim to the kingdom of Naples, as heir to the House of Anjou, for Charles of Anjou, brother to Saint Louis, had conquered that kingdom two hundred years before, and the

family rights had since been usurped by the House of Aragon. Charles decided to reclaim his own. For the sake of leaving quiet neighbors behind his back, this foolish young man, like Æsop's dog with the bone, gave Franche-Comté back to the Emperor, Roussillon back to Aragon, and sums of money to England; and then, at the head of a brilliant army, he rode down into Italy (1494). He proceeded, almost without opposition, from Pavia to Florence, from Florence to Rome, from Rome to Naples, and made a triumphal entry into that city on a black charger, decked out in satins and jewels. He speedily alienated the good will of all the inhabitants; he ousted Neapolitans from offices and put Frenchmen in their places, he married favorites to Neapolitan heiresses, levied heavy taxes, and gave himself up to enjoyment. He found Italy delightful, and wished that he had the rhetorical talents of Alain Chartier, the poetic delicacy of Jean de Meung, and the brush of Jean Fouquet to portray the beauties that delighted him.

But while he was wishing for adequate gifts of expression, Venice, Milan, the Emperor, and Ferdinand of Aragon had been making a league against him. He hurried home faster than he had come, and, in little over a year from the time he had left, was back again in France, his conquests lost, and with scanty renown. He betook himself to Amboise, where hard by the great castle he had built the enchanting chapel dedicated to Saint Hubert, in which, together with sculptured images of himself and his queen, Anne of Bretagne, he kept priceless relics — Dagobert's sword, Charlemagne's dagger, Saint Louis's battle-axe, the swords of his father and grandfather, the armor of Jeanne d'Arc and of Du Guesclin. And round about the château he now employed an Italian landscape gardener, Maestro Pasello, to clear away the woods and construct

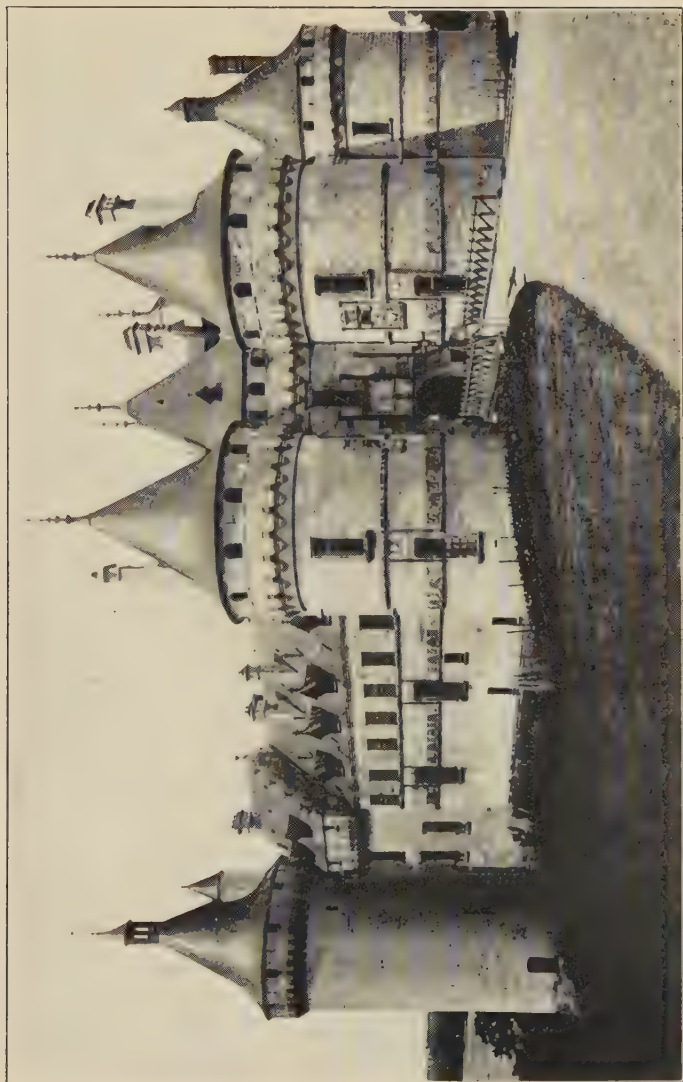
in their place terraces, fountains, gardens, and orchards of oranges. One day he hit his head on a lintel of a door, and died of the blow (1498). Charles VIII left no children living, so his cousin of the House of Orléans, son to Charles d'Orléans the poet, succeeded him as Louis XII. This king had a wife, but it was necessary to hold on to Brittany; therefore he divorced her and married the widowed Queen Anne of Bretagne.

It is convenient to date the beginning of the French Renaissance by Charles's campaign — one might almost say tour — in Italy. Charles did not do very much for that Renaissance himself, except to embellish Amboise, and to bring back pictures, furniture, books, objects of art of all sorts, as well as various artists and artisans. But he had opened the door and revealed to the companions of his expedition the charm that Italy has exercised on northern nations ever since. The Queen, Anne de Bretagne, admired Italian things also, but I repeat, in Charles's reign, except for opening the door, little was accomplished.

Louis XII opened the door wider, and held it open. I shall merely indicate his campaigns in Italy. He not only claimed the kingdom of Naples, as heir to the House of Anjou, but also the dukedom of Milan, as heir to the Visconti, who had been superseded by the Sforzas. The campaigns are complicated and tedious. Milan was won only to be lost again; and as to Naples, Louis XII made a bargain with Ferdinand of Aragon to conquer it together; this they did, and then the two robbers fell out and Ferdinand got the whole. The only facts of these campaigns that one cares to remember are that the Chevalier Bayard appears in "the good luck of his honor," and that Gaston de Foix won the victory of Ravenna (1512), but lost his life, with eighteen gaping wounds, all in front, and lies immortal in marble beauty on his tomb, with his laurel

wreath upon his brow. The spirit of the Italian Renaissance, however, did not pass into France by feats of arms, but rather in spite of them. Louis XII, when back in France, employed the artists and artisans that Charles had brought, — illuminator, architect, cabinetmaker, organ-builder, armorer, perfumer, and so on, — and invited Leonardo da Vinci to his court, doing him the honor to say that he was a *bon maître*. Nevertheless, as luck will have it, we remember Louis XII less by his Italianate taste than by the east wing of the glorious Château of Blois, which he built in the departing Gothic fashion, with its charming façade of reddish bricks, its flamboyant decoration, its dormer windows, and the fretful porcupine, the King's emblem.

Cardinal Georges d'Amboise is of more importance in the Renaissance than the King. He played a conspicuous rôle in diplomacy and politics, and aspired to the papal tiara, but his interest for us lies in the fact that he was a great patron of art. He built the Château Gaillon in Normandy, whose ruins lie on the way from Paris to Rouen. It was a great castle once, but was destroyed in the Revolution. In it there was a monumental fountain presented by the Seignior of Venice, and within the chapel, carved for the altar by Michel Colombe, the Saint George and Dragon that you now see in the Louvre. The Cardinal's brother, Abbot Jacques d'Amboise, built the Hôtel de Cluny at Paris, that lovely building that is bidding good-bye to the Gothic style and welcoming the Renaissance. You shall see that same meeting of courtly styles, but without the touch of Italy, in the Palais de Justice at Rouen. And the Cardinal's nephew built the magnificent Château of Chaumont, near Blois, where again the late Gothic and the new Renaissance style meet and greet. There is also at Blois the Hôtel d'Alluye,



CHÂTEAU OF CHAUMONT





built by Robertet, a minister of finance under Louis XII. You see that there is no marked line where the Italian influences suddenly burst in and dominate; they insinuate themselves gradually in one way and another. Cardinal Georges d'Amboise employed Italian sculptors at Château Gaillon; Andrea Solano, Leonardo's pupil, was with them. Fra Giocondo, the famous architect from Verona, it seems, built the Château de Bury near Blois. Italian artisans worked in Michel Colombe's studio. Francesco Laurana, the medalist and sculptor, also visited France.

So the influences come sifting in through crack and crevice, till, lo! the French Renaissance, quickened by Italy, blooms of itself. Louis XII died (1515), and a Florentine, Giovanni Giusti, sculptured his tomb at Saint-Denis — unless, indeed, the kneeling figures come from the atelier of Michel Colombe, for critics here, as elsewhere, do not agree. Louis XII left a daughter, Claude, married already to François comte d'Angoulême, the next of kin, who on her father's death succeeded to the throne.

François I, although he had neither brilliant talents nor strength of character, nevertheless played a prominent rôle in French history, partly because he was the great figurehead of the French Renaissance, and partly because of his lifelong rivalry with Charles V. In person he was tall, well-made, and of royal presence; an Italian said that in any company, however dressed, he was obviously the King. He had an unusual gift of conversation, and certain capacities for literary expression, and a kind of attractive boyish confidence that he would please; but he too soon dropped into fatuous self-complacency and attributed to himself superiorities over other men that he did not possess. He was ambitious, and personally brave, but he was irresolute, fickle, untrustworthy, prodigal, and disinclined to hard work for any length of time; and he

loved to pose. He was a spoiled child. His mother, whatever her motives, and his sweet sister Marguerite, older by two years, adored him. His chief claim to our respect is that he was (so it is said) "an artist to the tips of his fingers," or at least he delighted in beauty, in the arts, in dress, and all the sumptuous elegance of royal luxury.

François I is the centre of the new movement. This new movement, I repeat, is no mere imitation of Italy; it received a quickening of the pulse, a stimulation of the intellect, and then its own spirit of youth and joy and energy developed and produced. To us, tourists *à travers les âges*, France at the earlier part of the sixteenth century wears the appearance of a young and prosperous gallant. The nation has traveled far in the two generations since Jeanne d'Arc was burned as a heretic and witch, or even in the single generation since the poor sneak thief of genius, François Villon, wrote ballads in the *jargon des Coquillarts* or Louis XI sought cure from the prayers of a Calabrian hermit.

The deep cause of this rejuvenation and buoyancy was, as in the case of Italy, internal peace — peace, which gave opportunity to industry and energy, which opened workshops, sent merchants and peddlers from town to town, from fair to fair, which rendered the roads safe, and let boats load and unload on the river banks and sail at ease up and down the Seine, the Loire, and the Rhone. Internal peace prepared the way, and the intellect of Italy, bringing with it the heritage of antiquity, came in, as I have said, like an April morning to stimulate and quicken the new life.

Let us look about us in the valley of the *lente et capricieuse* Loire, which, dotted with châteaux, has become the pleasure ground of kings. Chinon we associate with

Jeanne d'Arc, Loches with Charles VII and Agnes Sorel, Plessis-lès-Tours with Louis XI, Amboise with Charles VIII and Anne de Bretagne, Blois with Louis XII, Chaumont with the great Amboise family; and yet none of them were good enough for François I. Near Blois he had a *maison de plaisance et rendez-vous de chasse*, and this by the help of eighteen hundred laborers during fifteen years he converted into the magnificence of the Château de Chambord (1523-1538). It was there that on a window-pane the light-minded King wrote the distich that Victor Hugo expanded into *Le Roi s'amuse* and Verdi into *Rigoletto*:

*Souvent femme varie,  
Bien fol est qui s'y fie,*

which indicates a degree of self-unconsciousness rare in a king. At Blois he transformed the great south wing of the mediæval castle into a Renaissance palace, with the marvelous outer staircase in the court that mounts and winds as if on its way up to an imperial heaven. The new construction (1516-1524) is very rich and complicated, with prodigal ornaments, in which one finds again and again the insignia of François and Claude, the salamander and the arrow-pierced swan. This mania for magnificent châteaux spread to rich courtiers. Gilles Berthelot, at one time royal treasurer, built Azay-le-Rideau (1518-1529); the d'Espinay family built that of Ussé; and another *receveur général des finances*, Thomas Bohier, began the more famous Château de Chenonceaux on the bank of the Cher (1515). It was a gay life — hunting in the park and forest, dancing, flirting, or discussing ground plans and elevations, dormer windows and mullions, with French and Italian architects. Madame de Châteaubriant, with whom François I fell in love at the

baptism of his oldest son, cheered the period of the King's first marriage, and the beautiful Madame d'Étampes that of his second. Of the latter lady Clément Marot wrote :

*Sans préjudice à personne  
Je vous donne  
La pomme d'or de beauté  
Et de ferme loyauté  
La couronne.*

Sometimes coronets of loyalty and prizes of beauty given by poets to royal mistresses are not to be accepted without critical scrutiny, but in the case of Madame d'Étampes they seem to have been justified.

The châteaux of the Loire are very splendid, but François I was as changeable as womankind are according to his distich. He went back to the Île-de-France — where the Château de Saint-Germain-en-Laye, in which he was married, that of Madrid in the Bois de Boulogne, now gone, that at Villers-Cotterets, on the way from Paris to Soissons, and more than all the Château of Fontainebleau, testify to his fickle taste. On the exterior, Fontainebleau was simple enough, for the great *escalier du fer-à-cheval* is a hundred years later, but, within, it was decorated with all the elegancies of Italian taste, — stucco, gilding, painting, bronzes, — which retold again on wall and ceiling all, or almost all, the episodes of classical mythology, *un prétexte à de belles nudités*. Some, passing the limit, have been wiped out. Two Italians, in charge of these decorations, employed a great many assistants, chiefly fellow countrymen, and so created the School of Fontainebleau, an Italianate school, which for good or evil, according to your taste, exercised a widespread influence. Rosso was the earlier of the two (1531-1541), Primatice (Primaticcio from Bologna) the second and more important (1533-



1570). So little is left of their work in its original state that it is hardly fair to turn one's back and say, "I can't bear this style." But whether you like it or not, François I did, and you have the right to judge him by it.

One characteristic of the Renaissance that marks it from the Middle Ages, and makes one feel that individuals have come out from the dark into the light, is that artists now appear as individuals with names and identities. Of course, some sculptors and architects of the earlier period were known by name, and also some painters, such as Jean Fouquet or Nicolas Froment, but generally works could only be assigned to ateliers or regions. Even of the famous Michel Colombe scarcely anything is known before the year 1500, when he was a man of threescore and more. With the coming of the Renaissance, artists are as well known as dukes and condottieri. Jean Bourdichon, *peintre du Roi*, decorated the chapel at Plessis-lès-Tours for Louis XI, painted the miniatures in Anne de Bretagne's *Book of Hours*, and decorated the tents that François I set up on the Field of the Cloth of Gold. Jean (or Janet, or Jehan Hay) Clouet (1475 ?–1540), a Fleming by birth, was *valet de chambre* for François I, and sent down pictures from Paris to Fontainebleau for the King's approval; perhaps he painted the self-complacent portrait of the King in the black and white *justaucorps* and bonnet with a white plume, now in the Louvre, and he certainly made many drawings of the young Dauphin and of distinguished persons of the court. Clément Marot (1539) classes him — the French have always appreciated their own artists — with Michael Angelo, and Ronsard refers to his son François Clouet as an *honneur de notre France*. François Clouet made death masks of François I and of Henri II, as his father Jean had done of Louis XII. These Clouet drawings are delicate, refined, restrained, and also both strong

and correct, and by their aid and by that of other painters we feel a much more vivid familiarity with the great personages of that generation. Marguerite of Navarre, for example, the King's sister, the charming lady who wrote both poems and stories, sat for her portrait with a little spaniel in her lap.

It is the same in the other arts. The workers in enamel begin to get names. In the Middle Ages their work, usually ecclesiastical ornaments, could be traced to a monastery, or to Paris perhaps, or to Limoges, but with the Renaissance the individual artists enjoy their personal renown. There is the Pénicaud family, of Limoges, the headquarters of the art, famous for generations — Léonard (Nardon) Pénicaud (1475?–1539), Jean I his brother, Jean II (1530?–1588) son to Jean I and the most important of the family, as well as a Jean III, and finally a Pierre. More distinguished than any of them, perhaps, is Léonard Limosin, who was called to Paris by François I, and became *valet de chambre* and *émailleur du Roi* (1548); for the King's orbit drew to itself all the arts that ministered to luxury; it was then (unfortunately, I should suppose) that he ceased to take his subjects from Albrecht Dürer and shifted to those of the School of Fontainebleau. During this generation, in the Île-de-France and the valley of the Loire life seems gay and charming:

*Le temps a laissé son manteau  
De vent, de froidure et de pluye.*

## XIV

### FRANÇOIS I AND HENRI II

FRANÇOIS I is, I repeat, regarded as the standard bearer of the Renaissance; and he was an amateur of art and beauty, an encourager and patron of artists, at least so far as his inconstant temper, love of women, and ambition permitted; but when he ascended the throne he was only twenty-one, and he longed to deck himself in sparkling robes of glory. Besides, he looked upon the dukedom of Milan as his of right, and throughout his reign, with greater constancy than for any other object, he strove to make it his. Spurred on by all the impatience of a spoiled boy, covetous of honor, and eager to see the land of gardens and oranges, of princely cities and beautiful women, of antique remains and modern art, he blew his trumpets and crossed the Alps. An army of Switzers, who since they had overthrown Charles the Bold were reputed invincible, attempted to defend the last of the Sforzas in Milan; but François I defeated them in a hard-fought fight at Marignano (September 1515). This was the only victory he was destined to enjoy for thirty years. But for a time all was glory.

A statesman with long-sighted aims, no doubt, would never have yielded to the Italian temptation; he would have cast his eyes westward across the Atlantic, and encouraged Bretons and Normands, from Honfleur and Dieppe, to increase and firmly establish their fisheries off Newfoundland, or to continue on up the St. Lawrence and found colonies; or else, if he was preoccupied with Europe and its politics, he would have intrigued to push the

eastern frontier of France eastward to the Rhine and sought to incorporate and absorb the intervening states, Flanders, Alsace, Lorraine, and such. But François I was not a farsighted statesman, and he was soon caught in the meshes of lifelong rivalry with Charles V. Their quarrel began when Charles was elected Emperor. That darling of Fortune had succeeded to the throne of Spain by right of his mother, to Flanders and sundry remains of the old Burgundian duchy as great-grandson of Charles the Bold, and on the death of Maximilian he had been elected Emperor (1519). François I had done what he could by bribery and corruption to win the election for himself, and bore his successful rival a bitter grudge. Beside that grudge there were other causes of quarrel: François claimed Milan as a descendant of the Visconti, Charles as a fief of the Empire; François held the duchy of Burgundy, but Charles asserted that it was rightfully a part of his inheritance; and Charles's far-flung possessions surrounded France, and his preponderant power seemed to threaten her very political existence.

The quarrels between these two set all Europe upside down, dragging in England, with Henry VIII and the high-aspiring Wolsey, all the states of Italy, and even the Turks. War soon broke out. Madame de Châteaubriant's brothers proved to possess poor generalship. The Constable Bourbon, who, not without plausible cause, deemed himself unjustly deprived of great baronies belonging to the House of Bourbon, deserted France and joined the Emperor. Things went ill. The disastrous battle of Pavia was fought in 1525. François wrote to his mother the famous letter: "*Madame, pour vous faire sçavoir comme se porte le reste de mon infortune, de toutes choses ne m'est demeuré que l'honneur et la vie qui est sauve.*" (To let you know the full extent of my misfortune, nothing is left to me

except my honor and my life.)” He was taken captive to Madrid. In his boyish notion that war was a chivalric sport, he expected the Emperor to treat him handsomely, name a ransom, and let him go. He reckoned without his host. He could not get out of prison until he had subscribed to the harshest terms — restoration of the duchy of Burgundy, renunciation of all claims in Italy, abandonment of the suzerainty of Flanders, payment of Charles’s debt to Henry VIII, union in a crusade against the Turks, and marriage with Charles’s sister Eleanor. François swore on his honor as a king and a gentleman to observe the treaty, then swore in private before a notary that he would not, and, leaving his two sons as hostages, returned to France (1526).

François I did not observe the treaty. But I will pass over the tedious renewals of war (1528–29, 1536–38, 1542–44) and touch upon the great cataclysm that shook Europe to its foundation. This was Luther’s revolt against the ancient ecclesiastical domination of the Roman Catholic hierarchy, a revolt founded upon national feeling in Germany, indignant at foreign domination, indignant at taxation without representation, troubled by the secular tone of the Papacy, by its surrender to the spirit of antiquity and the pleasures of art, and affected, too, by the awakening scientific spirit which confronted the metaphysical rationalism of Roman Catholic theology.

In France the movement appears at first as an outcome of the Renaissance and its new learning, of which Guillaume Budé, a great humanist, was the foremost representative, a sort of French Erasmus; Jean Clouet painted his portrait (1536). From Budé the torch was handed to Lefèvre d’Étaples, a saintly man, and in him we may, for our convenience, embody the first stage of the French Reformation. If his apostolical spirit had prevailed, the



Reform would have brought nothing but blessings. On the contrary, the Reformers, with so much justice on their side, delighted in unreason. The moderate people were full of sweetness and light, but they were few. Besides, the Church began to be thoroughly frightened; the Sorbonne (the theological faculty of the University of Paris) denounced Luther. The Reformers replied by smashing statues of the Virgin, and outraged piety, convention, and superstition. The Catholics took to persecution. Lesser cruelties foretold horrors to come. François I hardly knew how to envisage this disagreeable situation. It was most satisfactory to have Protestants making trouble for Charles V in Germany, but when it came to France the shoe was on the other foot. François I liked the free movement of the Renaissance, the ease, the absence of restraints, that it brought, and sympathized with the new thought even when it concerned itself with ethics and ecclesiastical polity, and as long as he could without alienating the mass of his subjects he went his way of pleasure-loving indifference, and in the intervals between wars gave himself to art. Let us accompany him for a moment.

François brought Italian artists to France. The great Leonardo, an aged man, spent the last few years of his life at or near Amboise. He seems to have still been painting; at any rate, he was master of the festival at the birth and baptism of the Dauphin, the occurrence on which François I first saw the beautiful Madame de Châteaubriant, and at Amboise he died (1519). The three famous pictures in the Louvre, "La Gioconda," "The Virgin on Her Mother's Lap," and "John the Baptist," are legacies from that time. Andrea del Sarto came for a few months (1518), and Benvenuto Cellini spent five years (1540-1545) in the King's service.

Benvenuto in his *Memoirs* has much to say of the King's behavior toward him — how the King called him *amico mio*, how extravagantly he admired him. He tells many stories — how he was lodged in the hotel of the Petit Nesle, how he fought off four robbers on his way back from the Louvre, how he resorted familiarly to Fontainebleau, how Madame d'Étampes got angry with him and said to the King, "I believe that devil will sack Paris one of these days," but the King took his part. Of Cellini's stories one believes what one chooses. Madame d'Étampes, he says, set Primaticcio to supplanting him in a royal commission for a fountain. Cellini admits that Primaticcio was an excellent master of design, and that Rosso, too, was an artist of extraordinary merit, but he could not put up with being robbed of commission and glory. "When I felt how greatly and wrongfully I had been betrayed, and saw a work which I had gained with my great toil thus stolen from me, I made up my mind for a serious stroke of business, and marched off with my good sword at my side to find Primaticcio."

Cellini represented the pagan spirit of the Renaissance in its essence, unconscious of ethics or religion, reveling in art and in the indulgence of all pleasures. François I was much the same sort of person. There is another man, however, far more interesting than either Cellini or François I, who deserves even more to serve as the figurehead of the Renaissance in France, for he represents the rising tide of intellectual curiosity, which, without any preconceived hostility to orthodoxy, was of necessity inimical because it insisted upon examining, questioning, flouting, and mocking. François Rabelais (1493-1553) was born at Chinon, where the proud inhabitants point out to you the site of the house where he lived, an arrow's flight from the château. He became a monk and a priest, at one time a

Cordelier, at another a Benedictine, and in the monasteries of these orders acquired great learning; he knew Latin and Greek, *utriusque linguæ omnifariæque doctrinæ peritissimus*. The great humanist, Guillaume Budé, treated him as a learned friend, and wrote to him in both languages. By special dispensation he dropped the frock; then he studied medicine, became a physician, and was attached to a hospital at Lyons (1532). Étienne Dolet, the scholar and printer, called him "the honor of medicine, who can call back the dying from the threshold of the grave and restore them to life." At the end of that year he published his first book, *Pantagruel*, and afterwards, two years later, *Gargantua*, which according to the chronology of the story ought to have come first, for Gargantua, son to Grandgousier, is the father of Pantagruel. These are wonderful books. Rabelais stands up like a kind of intellectual Falstaff, striking the attitude of a comic Victory, and blowing on his trumpet a great blast of thought and learning, in praise of freedom; he rants and rails, with wit, with grossness, with subtle thought, at monks and monasticism, at celibacy, at scholasticism, at the pettifogging professors of theology in the Sorbonne, — *sorbonistes, sorbonagres, sorbonicoles*, — and he draws a magnificently rollicking picture of Friar Jean: "*Hardy, aventureux, délibéré, hault, maigre, bien fendu de gueule, bien avantage en nez, beau despescheur d'heures, beau desbrideur de messes, beau descroteur de vigiles: pour tout dire sommairement, vray moyne, si oncques en feut depuys que le monde moynant moyna de moynerie*. (Bold, venturesome, resolute, tall, thin, throat wide open, well endowed with nose, fine scrabbler through prayers, fine dispatcher of masses, fine polisher-off of vigils; in short, a real monk, if ever there was one since the world began monkishly to monkey with monkery.)" When Frère Jean found the

enemy despoiling the vineyards of the monastery, he rushed into the chapel where his brethren were at prayer, shouted, "*Jamais homme noble ne hayst le bon vin,*" seized the staff of the cross, and rushed out upon the enemy. "*Ès uns escarbouilloyt la cervelle, ès aultres rompoyt bras et jambes, ès aultres deslochoyt les spondyles du coul, ès aultres demoulloyt les reins, avalloyt le nez, poschoyt les yeulx, fendait les mandibules, enfonçait les dens en la gueule, descroulloyt les omoplates, sphaceloit les greves, desgondait les ischies, devezilloit les fauciles.* (Of some he scrambled their brains, of others he broke arms and legs, of others he dislocated the vertebræ of the neck, of others he spoiled the shape of the loins, flattened their noses, puffed their eyes, split their jaws, knocked their teeth down their throats, smashed their shoulder blades, barked their shins, unhinged their hips, disconnected their elbows.)" And when Grandgousier has him to dinner to thank him for his valorous deeds, and pours him out a glass, Frère Jean, very loquacious, says: "Oh, how good God is to give us this good wine! I swear to God that if I had been alive at the time of Jesus Christ I should have taken jolly good care that the Jews should not have captured Him in the garden of Olivet. May the Devil take me, if I would n't have hamstrung messieurs the Apostles, who ran away so cowardly after they had had a good supper, and abandoned their master in His need! I hate like poison a man who runs away when knives should be out. D—n! Why ain't I king of France for eighty or a hundred years! By the Lord, I'd cut off the ears of the runaways at Pavia!" But I must refer the reader for *les beaux propos qu'il tint en souppant* to Chapter XXXIX of *Gargantua*, and to Chapter XL on "Why monks withdrew from the world, and why some have bigger noses than others."

Rabelais's vocabulary reminds one of Falstaff; his glorious vortex of inebriated words depicts, as nothing else could, all the ferment and seething that marked the contact of the new thought with the old. He was careful not to say anything openly unorthodox, but he attacked monks and he attacked the Sorbonne, so his position was uncomfortable. He tried to avoid trouble and to make friends with men of influence — for example, Budé the great scholar, Du Bellay, an eminent statesman, the Châtillon family, and Diane de Poitiers, whose amorous hold upon the Dauphin made her a person of the first consequence. Still, he felt it prudent on the death of François I, who had protected him, to betake himself to Rome.

Rabelais, like the King and Cellini, prized pleasure, but, a true Epicurean, he prized the pleasures of the mind as well as those of the body. But for other people life had more solemn interests. Lefèvre d'Étaples conceived of life in the terms of ethics and religion, and, though few were as religious-minded as he, there were many who concerned themselves seriously with the reformed doctrines — as, for example, Clément Marot, the poet (1496–1544). Clément Marot was by no means a poet of the first order, but he composed light verses, ironical, delicate, graceful — somewhat, one is tempted to say, like the charming arabesques that Italianate sculptors carved on the inner doors of Saint-Maclou at Rouen, and elsewhere. Like the late Gothic architects, he seems insincere and charming, with his compliments and his sentiments, as they with their mouldings, their gewgaws, their finials and crockets. He came from Cahors, prospered, and made his way into the royal court; Marguerite of Navarre patronized him, and the King appointed him his *valet de chambre*. He wrote rondeaux, ballades, and epigrams; if you care to read any, I should counsel his Epistle to the



Duchess of Ferrara, a French princess, describing Venice. But he had his serious side; he, too, regarded ethics and religion as necessary elements in a complete life, took to the new doctrines of the Reformers, and was inconsiderate enough to mock ancient and venerable practices, just as less educated persons had maltreated statues of the Virgin. By this time the antagonism between orthodoxy and reform had become bitter. Marot was prosecuted for eating meat in Lent (1532). This does not sound to us so dangerous as it was, for not very long afterwards the violent Reformers posted *placards* all over Paris, in Orléans, at Bloise, at Amboise, and even on the very door of the King's bedchamber. These *placards* blasphemed against the mass. The Catholics, who were in an enormous majority, were stirred to fury; the Sorbonne and the Parlement de Paris raged like hungry lions. Marot, included in the list of suspected persons, fled to the court of Navarre, where the gentle Marguerite protected pious inquirers into the new ideas, and then, prudently enough, on, across the Alps, to the Duchess of Ferrara, who had the same attitude. Finally he died, a Protestant, in Turin.

François I by this time had to come out into the open and support orthodoxy -- more especially as his intrigues with Protestants in Germany, and with the Turks, exposed him to suspicion. He could not afford to antagonize the clergy. The Roman Catholic Church was nervous. Germany had been rent asunder, and the Lutherans held the greater part. Henry VIII had married Anne Bullen, in despite of the Pope, and had withdrawn England from its allegiance to the mother church. Sweden, Norway, and Denmark were also in ecclesiastical revolt. It might still be that the Reformation would sweep through the Latin countries, and the great international Church of

Christendom everywhere would be supplanted by national and local churches. The King had had little sympathy with the harsh upholders of orthodoxy, but he knew that the great bulk of the nation was fervently Catholic, he had married his son Henry, the year before, to the Pope's niece, Catherine dei Medici, and his Italian policy required the Pope's support. Besides, he shared in the general sense of outrage caused by the mutilated statues; perhaps also he was fearful lest the heavenly powers might be offended and punish the nation and its king. With Charles V confronting him, it would be well to have the heavenly powers on his side. He marched bareheaded in the expiatory processions, and uttered a memorable discourse, saying that if his right hand were infected by such rottenness he would cut it off, and if his children should be he would offer them up in sacrifice. There were edicts, inquisitions, and burnings at the stake.

François I died in 1547, and his son, Henri II, succeeded him. Henri was a man of goodly stature, given to athletic exercises, physically brave, with a mediocre intelligence, and a character like wax. Anne de Montmorency, Constable of France, was in chief control of public affairs, and the beautiful Diane de Poitiers of private affairs. Henri, at the age of fifteen, married Catherine de Médicis (as the French write it), a girl of fourteen, and at eighteen fell under the influence of Diane, twenty years his senior. At Versailles the tourist sees her portrait, as she very discreetly takes a bath — *tout comprendre, c'est tout pardonner*. Henri II was killed in a tournament (1559), but before that date, which rings up the curtain on the chapter of civil war between Huguenots and Catholics, there is a pleasant interlude, splendid in famous achievements, that one would like to dawdle over.

François I had begun the first stage in the conversion of

the Louvre from a mediæval castle into the noblest palace in the world. Pierre Lescot (1510-1571), the architect, was in charge. Henri went ahead with the work; you see his and Diane's initials interlaced, as their lives were in life. And the great Jean Goujon, the sculptor, carved the figures that you go to see on the inner façade of the court. Lescot and Jean Goujon also worked together at the Fountain of the Innocents, now sadly changed, in a square very near *les Halles*. There is nothing, unless it be Ronsard's verses, that embodies the essence of the gay, imaginative, classical spirit of the French Renaissance as these lovely nymphs do, each holding her water jug according to her own capricious fancy. Jean Goujon also modeled the great statue of Diane de Poitiers reclining with her left hand holding a bow and her right arm around the neck of a stag. Henri also employed the other great pair, Philibert Delorme, architect (1515-1570), who designed the palace of the Tuileries and that part of the Château de Chenonceaux that spans the river, and Pierre Bontemps, sculptor. The two, among other things, constructed the tomb of François I at Saint-Denis. Delorme, I believe, is thought now to outrank Lescot, but Ronsard would have nothing of the kind.

*Toi, Lescot, dont le nom jusqu'aux astres vole!*

There is a third famous Renaissance architect, Jean Bullant (1515-1578), who built the Château d'Écouen for Anne de Montmorency and worked on the palace of the Tuileries, and a third famous sculptor, Germain Pilon (1535-1590), whose Three Graces, if you like them, you can look at in the Louvre. Pilon also modeled the statues of Henri II and Catherine de Médicis on their tomb at Saint-Denis, and that of Cardinal de Birague, *l'âme damnée de Catherine de Médicis*, in the Louvre, and others too.

It is the name of Ronsard that, more than aught else, makes one angry with the religious fanaticism and the religious wars it bred. Why should not the Reformers have let theology alone and kept on in the old fold? Why did not the Catholics let the Reformers err and stray at their pleasure, and all unite to cultivate an appreciation of Lescot, Delorme, and Bullant, of Jean Goujon, Pierre Bontemps, and Germain Pilon, of the seven poets that make the *Pléiade*, — Dorat, Ronsard, Du Bellay, Baïf, Belleau, Pontus de Thiard, and Jodelle, — and, if they wished, of Diane de Poitiers?

Of these poets, Ronsard (1524-1585) is easily the first. He was destined by birth and breeding for life at court, but deafness turned him to scholarship and poetry. His poetry is not always of a level; much that he has written lacks simplicity — for instance, his eulogy of Henri II is full of mythological figures, elaborate *repoussé* work; but his happy lyrics have, in their mingling of freshness and classical thoughts, an incomparable charm. Such is that to the Fontaine Bellerie, a most free and graceful paraphrase of Horace's *O Fons Bandusiae*:

*Tu es la Nymphe éternelle  
De ma terre paternelle;  
Pource en ce pré verdelet  
Voy ton poëte qui t'orne  
D'un petit chevreau de lait  
À qui l'une et l'autre corne  
Sortent du front nouvelet.*

And all the world knows,

*Mignonne, allons voir si la rose,*

and the sonnet,

*Quand vous serez bien vieille, etc.*

Ronsard, too, in his early youth felt drawn toward the Reform, but it was not for long. A poet, not without voluptuous tastes, could hardly like those austere con-temners of pleasure :

*Non, non, je ne veux point que ceux qui  
doivent naître,  
Pour un fol Huguenot me puissent reconnoître.*

The Huguenots, however, were not discouraged by this slight, and we must leave the pleasant places of the Renaissance for the tragic battlefields of civil strife. But first a brief aside to the reader. He must remember that all through the reign of the Emperor Charles V France was surrounded by his hostile dominions, and that the two were usually at war, and that on Charles's abdication and after his death (1558) his son Philip II of Spain, lord of the Low Countries, continued the war. Peace was at last made the year that Henri II was killed (1559); the French gave up all claims to Italy, but kept three bishoprics they had seized — Metz, Verdun, and Toul.



## XV

### FRANÇOIS II, CHARLES IX, HENRI III

HENRI II was an ardent Catholic; and it is said that one of the reasons that induced him and Philip II of Spain to make peace was to leave their hands free to deal with heretics, Henri in France and Philip in the Low Countries. The struggle against the Reformation was in full blast. The whole Church was making an effort to purify herself, to consolidate her forces, to secure what she still held and win back what secessionists she could. Ignatius Loyola had founded the Society of Jesus; the Council of Trent had begun its sessions. In France the situation was becoming serious, for Reform had passed from the early stage, when Lefèvre d'Étaples was teaching aspirations back to an apostolic life, into the belligerent stage of self-defense. The Huguenots, encouraged by the German Lutherans, had gathered themselves into congregations all over France, and these congregations were united in a confederacy. *Grands seigneurs* came forward to lead them, and secular ambitions pushed to the fore. The reason that the Huguenots were able to come together and make a party was that a chief had stepped forward and raised a standard to which the God-fearing could repair. Calvin was to them what George Washington was to our revolution.

Jean Calvin (1509-1564) was by birth a Picard. He studied in Paris, also at Orléans and at Bourges; then he returned to Paris, where François I had just instituted the Collège de France, with its chairs of Greek, Hebrew, Mathematics, and Latin. He seems to have been converted to

the new ideas soon after he was twenty-one. He says: "At first I was so stubbornly given over to papistical superstitions that it was no easy job to drag me out of that deep mire. Nevertheless, God by a sudden conversion rendered my heart docile and brought it into the right way." A year later he composed a discourse that set forth his new ideas; in consequence of this he was obliged to depart into another province. From there he went to Geneva (1536), at that time an independent city, and set up those doctrines that we know as Calvinism, — *la gloire de Dieu est la principale fin de toute la société humaine*, — with its logic, its austerity, its purity, and its acrid rigidities. The revealed word of Holy Writ, with dogmas of the fall of man, of grace and salvation, furnished the scaffolding of its high argument. His *L'Institution de la religion chrestienne* ranks with *Gargantua*, Ronsard's *Poésies*, and Montaigne's *Essais*, as one of the great French books of the century. How seriously he took his doctrine of truth we know by the burning of Michael Servetus. Calvin was the moral chief of the Huguenots, and Calvinism was the binding material that held them together, but the party had also its political and military leaders. So also had the Catholics. Some of these leaders it is now my duty to enumerate.

I begin with the Catholics. Anne de Montmorency, Constable of France (1492–1567), was an ambitious, covetous, arrogant man, who had been virtually at the head of affairs under François I and Henri II. Though he had been badly beaten by the Spaniards at Saint-Quentin (1557), he managed to hold his position. His most favorable claim to a friendly memory is that he employed the architect Bullant to build the palace of Chantilly (1560) — that is, the Châtelet, the only old part that survived the Revolution. Next to him came

the great and numerous family of Guise, of the House of Lorraine. Of the older generation there were two brothers, Claude, duc de Guise (1496-1550), and Jean, Cardinal of Lorraine (1498-1550). The younger generation, Claude's children, consisted of a daughter, Marie (who married James V, King of Scotland), the mother of Mary Stuart; François *le balafre* (1519-1563), who married a daughter of that Duchess of Ferrara, daughter to Louis XII, who harbored Clément Marot when he had fled from persecution after the affair of the *placards*; Charles (1525-1574), archbishop of Reims, and also in his turn Cardinal of Lorraine; Claude, duc d'Aumale, who married a daughter of Diane de Poitiers; and Louis, archbishop of Sens, Cardinal de Guise. In the third generation, the sons of François *le balafre* were Henri *le balafre* (1550-1588), Charles, duc de Mayenne (1554-1611), Louis, Cardinal de Guise (1555-1588); and in the fourth generation, Charles, duc de Guise (1571-1640), son to Henri *le balafre*. This brilliant family desired to dominate in the government, and constituted the head and front of the Catholic party; among those of the second generation, François *le balafre*, who won great renown by the defense of Metz against the Spaniards and by recovering Calais from the English, was conspicuous for valor, ability, charm, and reckless daring.

At the head of the Huguenots were the three brothers of the Coligny family, nephews to Anne de Montmorency — Odet (1517-1571), a cardinal, Gaspard (1519-1572), the admiral, and François, Seigneur d'Andelot (1531-1569). Of the House of Bourbon, Antoine de Vendôme, who married Jeanne d'Albret of Navarre, daughter to Queen Marguerite, wavered between the two parties for a time and then put himself at the head of the Catholic faction, while his brother Louis, Prince de Condé, became the

titular leader of the Huguenots. These two were princes of the blood. It is enough to learn the characters of these *dramatis personæ*, with whom, thanks to the pencil of François Clouet and the pen of Brantôme, one feels a certain personal acquaintance, to see that civil war is not far off. As to the Huguenots, they had got well over their early Christian resignation: *Ils se faschoyent de la patience chrestienne et évangélique*. They did not propose to go to the stake without resistance; and the Catholic nobles were not a whit behind them in violent resolution.

The boy king, François II, was on the throne; he had married Marie Stuart, a niece of the Guises. His mother, Catherine de Médicis, with a disposition not improved, perhaps, because the beautiful Diane de Poitiers, though twenty years her senior, had displaced her in her husband's affections, had not yet come into her period of influence, and for the present the Guises, as uncles to the Queen, were in possession of the King. The Huguenots took the first hostile step. A plot was formed, though none of the leaders I have named except the Prince de Condé seem to have known anything about it, to capture the King and the two heads of the House of Guise, François *le balaféré* and the Cardinal of Lorraine, who were all at the Château of Amboise. The attempt failed signally, and punishment was heavy; many of the Huguenots were cut down or drowned, and many were hanged on gibbets in the court of the Château or from a balcony of the upper story that faces the river, still known as *le balcon des conjurés* (1560). Condé was tried and condemned to death, and only saved by the death of the King and fall of the Guises.

This plot against the King was both an act of rebellion and a bad political move on the part of the Huguenots, but it did not hurt them as much as it might have done,

for there was a widespread discontent with the high-handed Guises, who were looked upon as foreigners from Lorraine. Soon afterwards the King died, and Charles IX succeeded (1560). The Guises, being no longer uncles to royalty, were pushed to one side, and Catherine de Médicis, in order to secure the regency for herself, forgave Condé on condition that Antoine de Bourbon, who as first prince of the blood had rival claims to the post, should renounce them. This proceeding reduced the Guises to the position of partisan chiefs of the Catholic party. The regency secured, Catherine de Médicis, with the help of the chancellor, Michel de l'Hôpital, who has left a reputation in France for righteousness and sagacity somewhat like that of Sir Thomas More in England, tried at first to smooth the quarrel between the two religious factions, and granted to the Huguenots the right to worship in their own houses. But other forces opposed any peaceful reconciliation. Philip II of Spain, fearful lest a successful reformation in France might cause another in the Low Countries, tried to bully the Queen Regent, while Anne de Montmorency, François de Guise, and a third great Catholic nobleman, the Maréchal de Saint-André, set themselves up as a triumvirate to control affairs. Obviously the Huguenots were being pushed to the wall; nevertheless, it was a bit of bad luck that brought on civil war. Probably it would have come soon in any event, because both Catholics and Huguenots were committing outrages. But this is what happened. The duc de Guise, after his return from Germany, where he had been trying to convince the Lutherans that the Catholics were more of their way of thinking than the Calvinists, passed through a town called Vassy, where a Huguenot conventicle was celebrating services. The Duke remonstrated; stones were thrown, and the Duke's musketeers



fired. Over twenty Huguenots were killed and a hundred wounded. That meant war.

The Catholics sought help from Spain, the Huguenots from England. Fighting began. Antoine de Bourbon was killed at the siege of Rouen, and not long afterwards François de Guise was murdered. Battles, skirmishes, destruction, and devastation took place everywhere. Then the parties came to terms; the Huguenots were permitted to worship within houses, and, as to certain towns, within their churches. This is known as the Pacification of Amboise, March 1563. A second war (1567-1568) was followed by peace for a few months, and then by a third war. Old actors step off the stage and new come on. Anne de Montmorency was killed, and young Henri d'Anjou, the King's brother, and young Henri de Guise, son to the murdered Duke, become Catholic leaders; while on the Huguenot side, young Henri de Navarre, son to Antoine de Bourbon, and young Louis de Condé take their dead fathers' places. Now the story grows very entangled. The King fell under the influence of Admiral Coligny, and the Admiral conceived a plan of circumventing the Catholics by getting France into war with Spain, which would necessitate alliances with the Protestant Powers, England and Holland, and also force the Catholic party to be loyal to the government or else declare themselves as open traitors. Catherine de Médicis, who had given up her earlier attempt to steer a middle course and had joined the Catholics, convinced herself that there was grave danger in Coligny's influence over the young King, and that the only safety to Catholic France lay in his death. We are now coming to the anniversary of the day set apart to reverence the memory of the humble apostle, Saint Bartholomew (August 23, 1572).

You may see the actors of the tragedy in the portraits

by François Clouet: Charles IX, a mere boy, perplexed, unstable, irresolute; his girl wife, Elizabeth of Austria, undeveloped, slow of comprehension, neither sensitive nor emotional, but beautifully dressed and very pretty; the Queen Mother, in her widow's weeds, with bulging brow, prominent eyes, receding chin, and her untrustworthy, intelligent, inscrutable, Italian face; young Henri d'Anjou, grave and serious of face, but a fop, effeminate and superstitious, and yet very much of a grand seigneur; Coligny, shrewd, alert, persistent, the noblest figure of the time. The powers of evil moved fast. Charles IX, still hoping for reconciliation, betrothed his sister Margot, Marguerite de Valois, to young Henri de Navarre, although rumour said that she was attached to the brilliant young Henri de Guise. The wedding was celebrated in Notre-Dame, on August 18. Four days later the Guises suborned a man to murder Coligny, for they believed that Coligny had had a hand in their father's murder. Blood for blood, Coligny was wounded. The Huguenots, very indignant, spoke hot words to the Queen Mother; she thought that they were bent upon desperate revenge, and, taking counsel with Henri d'Anjou and the Guises, decided to forestall them. She succeeded in persuading the poor irresolute young King that a general massacre of the Huguenots was the only means of saving kingdom and crown. I will quote here from the *Mémoires* of Marguerite de Valois, wife of Henri de Navarre:

"The elder Pardaillan and other Huguenot chiefs spoke to the Queen, my mother, in such fashion that they made her believe that they had some evil intention. By the advice of M. de Guise, and of my brother, king of Poland, and since king of France [Henri d'Anjou], it was decided to forestall them. King Charles, who was very

fond of M. l'Amiral (Coligny) . . . and other chiefs of the Huguenots . . . was opposed to the plan. And, from what I have since heard him say, they had great difficulty to obtain his consent, and if he had not been persuaded that his life and the kingdom were at stake he never would have given in. . . . The King, who was very wary, and had always been very dutiful to the Queen my mother, and very Catholic, seeing how things lay, straightway decided to join the Queen his mother and accede to her will and safeguard himself from the Huguenots by means of the Catholics. . . . So going to the Queen he summoned M. de Guise and all the other Catholic princes and leaders, and it was decided to execute that very night the St. Bartholomew massacre. The work was begun at once; chains were laid [across the streets], the tocsin was rung, every man ran to his post, according to order. . . . M. de Guise repaired to the Admiral's house; there a German gentleman, Besme, went up, stabbed the Admiral, and threw his body out of the window down to his master, M. de Guise.

"Nobody had said a word to me of all this . . . the Huguenots were suspicious of me because I was a Catholic, and the Catholics because I had married the King of Navarre, a Huguenot. For this reason nobody spoke of the plot to me; and that evening I was present at the *coucher* of the Queen my mother, sitting on a chest beside my sister, wife of the Duke of Lorraine, who was very dejected, when the Queen my mother, while talking to some person, noticed me and bade me go to bed. As I was curtseying, my sister caught my arm, stopped me, and, bursting into tears, said, 'For God's sake, sister, don't go.' This frightened me very much. The Queen my mother, perceiving this, called my sister, got very angry, and forbade her to say more. . . . Again she

bade me roughly to go to bed. My sister, in tears, said nothing, but good-night, and I went, unable to imagine what the danger might be. As soon as I reached my boudoir I knelt and prayed to God to keep me, without knowing from what. After that the King my husband, who was already in bed, told me to get to bed. I did so, and found his bed surrounded by thirty or forty Huguenots whom I did not know, as I had only been married a few days."

Margot could not sleep a wink, and the courtiers talked of the attack on Coligny. The king of Navarre got up at daybreak and went out with all his gentlemen in the resolve to demand justice of King Charles as soon as possible.

"Seeing that it was day, I thought that the danger of which my sister spoke had passed, and, overcome by sleep, I bade my nurse lock the door so that I might sleep undisturbed.

"An hour later, while I was fast asleep, a man beat and kicked at the door, shouting 'Navarre! Navarre!' My nurse, thinking it was the King my husband, hurried to the door and opened it. There was M. de Lérans, a sword cut on his elbow, a halberd gash on his arm, chased by four soldiers, who all entered my room close after him. To save himself he jumped on my bed. Feeling a man hold me, I rolled off, and he too, clasping me tight round the body. I didn't know him, nor whether he had come to outrage me, nor whether the soldiers were after him or after me. Both of us shrieked, both equally scared. By the grace of God, M. de Nançay, Captain of the Guards, came in, and when he saw me as I was, in spite of his pity, he could n't keep from laughing. He scolded the soldiers soundly for their ill behavior and sent them off, and granted me the life of the poor fellow that was clinging to me. I made M. de Lérans lie down in my boudoir, and

had his wounds taken care of until they were healed. While I was changing my chemise, as it was all covered with blood, M. de Nançay told me what had taken place, and assured me that my husband was in the King's chamber and would not be hurt. I wrapped a bed quilt about me and followed him to the chamber of my sister, the Duchess of Lorraine. I got there more dead than alive. Just as I was entering the antechamber, the doors of which were wide open, a gentleman named Bourse, trying to escape from soldiers who chased him, was struck down not three steps from me by the blow of a halberd. I fell over, almost swooning, into the arms of M. de Nançay, and thought that I had been hit too. Recovering myself somewhat, I got into the little room where my sister slept. While I was there, M. de Miossans, my husband's first gentleman-in-waiting, and Armagnac, his first *valet de chambre*, came in to beg me to save their lives. I threw myself on my knees to the King and the Queen my mother; and at last they acceded."

Over two thousand Huguenots were murdered in Paris, seven hundred in Lyons, five hundred at Orléans, two hundred in Meaux, and so on in many other places. The massacres lasted for weeks. The Pope ordered a medal struck in honor of the deed; Philip II, contrary to his custom, broke out into a joyous laugh; Henri de Navarre and young Condé turned Catholic. But I must hurry on. Charles IX died, and his brother Henri III, a cultivated, scholarly man, but vacillating, idle, and given over to lewd company, succeeded him; he hesitated what to do, urged on by his Catholic sympathies, but held back by his jealousy of young Henri de Guise. To make matters worse, the King had no children, and his last brother, the duc d'Alençon died, leaving Henri de Navarre heir to the throne. The stage is now occupied by the three Henrys —



Henri III, the king, jealous, suspicious, and grossly spoken of; Henri de Navarre, the heir, once more a Protestant, who was giving proofs of energy, vigor, and courage; and Henri de Guise, the "uncrowned king," a fit hero for a romantic novel. The great bulk of the nation was resolved that it would not have a Protestant king. The Pope declared Henri de Navarre a heretic, without civil rights. Henri de Guise, at the head of the Catholic League, put up old Cardinal Bourbon, uncle to Henri de Navarre, as heir to the throne, being the Catholic next in blood. Paris cheered for Guise. On May 12 the citizens threw up barricades across the streets and drove the royal troops out of the city. The King only escaped by flight. He left *ses secrets et étranges plaisirs* and betook himself a vagabond to Chartres, with hatred gnawing at his heart, while Henri de Guise remained king of Paris and Henri de Navarre king of the Huguenots. But Henri III was obliged to pocket his anger and agree to accept the good pleasure of Guise and the League; he swore that there should be no Huguenot king and no toleration of heresy, but he chafed inwardly.

A meeting of the States-General was held at Blois (October 1588). Among the throng was a gentleman from Gascony, Michel de Montaigne, destined to be the most famous of them all. The sessions proceeded. The King hoped for support against the League; but no, the States-General — clergy, *noblesse*, and commons — were for the League and Henri de Guise. The King was forced to make all sorts of promises, "*Que Dieu m'abisme et me damne si j'y contreviens.*"

Tourists enter the great Château of Blois by the wing that Louis XII built, and then turn to the right, cross the court, and mount the stair that might have been wrought by Mulciber. They go from the first story, where Cather-

ine de Médicis lodged, by the *escalier des Quarante-Cinq*, to the second story, which you find divided longitudinally by the wall of the earlier castle, which François I had left when he added his new section. On the court side of this wall is a great hall with two noble chimneys, at one of which Henri, duc de Guise, was warming himself on the morning of December 22, 1588. The evening before, he had had a long conversation with the King, who had shown the most marked signs of good will and intimacy, exchanging bonbons with him; nevertheless, Guise's friends scented treachery, and had bidden him be careful. The Duke replied, "*Il n'oserait* (He would n't dare)," and went to see the lovely Madame de Sauves. At dawn — for there was to be a council meeting — various noblemen and prelates gathered in the great hall, and, as I have said, the Duke stood before the fire; he had come in a hurry, and, having had nothing to eat, sent his secretary to fetch something. The secretary, oddly, did not come back, and the Duke was given some dried plums. Meanwhile the King, who occupied the outer suite of rooms, had invited a good many matinal guests, — the *Quarante-Cinq* (a bodyguard of Gascons), — whom he concealed in corridors, closets, and stairways roundabout, also various intimates who went into one of the rooms of the royal suite, and two priests who retired to an oratory to celebrate mass and pray that the King "might accomplish an act for the quiet of his kingdom." It was now near eight o'clock. One of the King's gentlemen went into the great hall and said to the Duke that the King would like to see him in his chamber. The Duke went in, and the assassins fell upon him. So he perished like his father. His brother the Cardinal de Guise was also murdered; their bodies were burned and some say that the ashes were thrown into the Loire.

## XVI

### HENRI IV

HENRI III wrote, "At last I am King"; but he was mistaken. The League, instead of cowering, rose in revolt and vowed vengeance. The Sorbonne declared the people free from their allegiance. The Parlement de Paris swore by *Dieu, sa glorious mère, anges, saints, et saintes de Paradis* that its members would shed the last drop of their blood for the Catholic religion, and resist those that had broken public faith by murder. Charles de Guise, duc de Mayenne, became head of the League. The King's party dwindled away; he was left with little beside Tours and Blois. In despair he turned for support to Henri de Navarre, who was always careful to keep the door open for a possible reconciliation.

Then the Queen Mother, Catherine de Médicis, died, and Henri III was murdered by Jacques Clément, a fanatical, crazy monk (August 1589). So Henri de Navarre, heretic, became the lawful king of France. The League, however, would not accept him; they could raise twice as large an army as he, but he was a host in himself. Gay, alert, vivacious, brave, gifted with many social gifts, he was also a good soldier. He won the battle of Arques (1589), and the battle of Ivry (March 14, 1590), with which Macaulay's ballad has made us familiar. The field, in Normandy, lies but a mile or two from the beautiful Château d'Anet that had been built by Philibert Delorme for Diane de Poitiers. Though Navarre had but ten thousand men while the enemy had double that number, he ordered an attack. At first the battle went

against the royalists, but they rallied and the reserves came up. Henri cried: "*Mes compagnons, Dieu est pour nous, voici ses ennemis et les nôtres. Voici votre roi! À eux! Si vos cornettes vous manquent, ralliez-vous à mon panache blanc, vous le trouverez au chemin de la victoire et de l'honneur.*"

And in they rushed, and on they pressed,  
While, like a guiding star,  
Amidst the thickest carnage blazed  
The helmet of Navarre.

It was a glorious victory, but it was not enough. The League was resolved not to have a Protestant king, and the city of Paris, which had now grown to a position of dominance in the country, was fanatical on the subject. I have said before that the doings in Paris at the time of Étienne Marcel foreshadowed those of the Revolution of 1789; and now such a foreshadowing is again visible. The citizens formed a committee of public safety, they organized suspicion and fear into a political force, they seized the property of émigrés, and purged the city government of those that had no sympathy with them. It was a little revolution. Throughout the country, however, there was a moderate party, strongly Catholic, that wished for peace and was quite ready to accept Henri IV but for the obstacle of his religion. Henri IV professed to be open-minded and ready to examine the issues between the two creeds. He consulted learned divines, and became convinced that the Catholics were in the right. On July 23 he wrote to La Belle Gabrielle, "*Je commence ce matin à parler aux évêques. . . . Ce sera dimanche que je ferai le saut périlleux.*" (On Sunday I shall take the perilous leap.) Accordingly he went to Saint-Denis on July 25, 1593, and swore to live and die in the Roman Catholic

Church. *Paris vaut bien une messe*. And in the following February he was crowned at Chartres, for a recalcitrant Guise still held Reims. The cause was won. The malcontents came in gradually, war with Spain ended, and the Edict of Nantes granted to Protestants full liberty of conscience and ample liberty of public worship (1598).

So for nearly forty years religious strife had desolated France. It has been estimated that four millions of men perished, and how much else one cannot tell. Of necessity the joyous days of François I and of Diane de Poitiers had gone; the great architects had died — Philibert Delorme (1570), Pierre Lescot (1571), Jean Bullant (1578) — and left no successors, for there were châteaux to be destroyed but none to be built. François Clouet died in 1572, Corneille de Lyon soon afterwards, and we shall not come upon other painters of equal interest, excepting perhaps the Dumonstiers, till Richelieu shall have built up an absolute monarchy. The great artist in enamel, Léonard Limosin, died about 1576, and the art faded away. Germain Pilon died in 1590; Jean Goujon had died long before. Bernard Palissy, celebrated as a potter, — you may see his fishes, eels, frogs, and sea creatures crawling in enamel over platters and dishes, on exhibition at the Louvre, — and in his day more celebrated as a savant, died about 1590. You feel that the great push of joyous life in the earlier period, which might have brought forth still riper fruits, has been crushed out by these cruel wars.

There are some memorable names in literature, however. Jacques Amyot (1513–1593) translated Plutarch, and his *Lives* have been in the hands of every French lad who grew into a hero, from Henri IV to La Fayette; his style, too, has been praised by everybody, from Montaigne to Sainte-Beuve. There is also the loquacious Brantôme, who in those bustling times was turned from



an actor into a spectator by a fall from his horse. Many of the personages he talks of come into our story — for instance, M. de Guise le Grand (François) and M. l'Amiral de Chastillon (Coligny). "*Ny plus ny moins qu'un bon lapidaire oppose deux beaux diamans l'un contre l'autre pour mieux les apprécier, de mesme en fais-je de ces deux grands capitaines.*" (As a jeweler sets diamond opposite diamond in order to bring out their brilliancy, so do I with these two great captains.)" He repeats, however, that the deeds the Admiral performed were done against God, against the religion in which he had been baptized, against his country and his king.

Far more important than either of them, both in literature and as an exponent of the time, is Michel de Montaigne. His *Que sais-je?* is a condensed criticism upon the religious wars. His implication — for he was too prudent to speak unguardedly — was this: The Calvinists assert that truth is to be found in the letter of the Bible; *Que sais-je?* The Catholics assert that truth abides in the mystical body of the Church; *Que sais-je?* Both agree that persons who do not agree with them should be converted by force; *Que sais-je?* It is better that the body should suffer for a time than the soul throughout eternity; *Que sais-je?* This was Montaigne's deduction from the lessons of the civil war, and it meant compromise, tolerance, and doubt. Henri IV had come to the same conclusions. The two men were in accord. Their minds were alike, their dispositions different; the King was making love to *la charmante* Gabrielle or some other lady (sixty-four are known by name) while Montaigne was writing immortal essays. *Chacun à son goût.*

Montaigne was a Gascon gentleman, bred to the law. He filled various offices, and was for a time mayor of Bordeaux (? 1581-1585). Before that he was gentleman of

the bedchamber both to Henri of Navarre and to Henri III. At one time he endeavored, it is said, to reconcile Navarre and Henri de Guise. But his disposition was Epicurean; he did not care for the society of swash-bucklers. His pleasure was to pace up and down in his garden and ruminate on this strange world, in which for him, and for each of us, the *moi* is the great protagonist. *C'est moi que je peins*. Or he withdrew to his library — *librairie*, he called it — in his Château de Montaigne on the bank of a little tributary of the Dordogne. The library, which you may still see in the third story of the round tower, contained some two hundred and fifty books — ancient classics and modern literature, French, Italian, Spanish, with Amyot's *Plutarch* oftenest read. Henri de Navarre visited him there. The general craving for such tranquil philosophy is proved by the immediate popularity of his essays. The first two books were published in 1580, and a third in 1588. Montaigne is the fourth, out of a wilderness of authors, to share with Shakespeare, Dante, and Molière the honor of a private personal compartment in the stacks of the Harvard College Library:

“*Questi chi son, ch' hanno cotanta onranza,  
che dal modo degli altri li diparte?*”  
. . . “*L'onrata nominanza,  
che di lor suona su nella tua vita,  
grazia acquista nel ciel che sì gli avanza.*”

Who are these so honored that they have stacks apart? Their honorable renown that goes sounding through the Widener Library has gained them academic favor.

But to return to Henri IV. His life was hard and laborious, but it had its pleasant, sunlit patches. He really loved Gabrielle d'Estrées, then a girl scarce twenty:

Feb. 4, 1593

*Mon bel ange,*

If I were free to importune you not to forget me, the end of each letter would be the beginning of another. . . . Never was there fidelity like mine. . . .

Feb. 9, 1593

*Mon bel ange,*

. . . I am your faithful slave, and shall be to the last. I kiss your hands a million times.

Feb. 10, 1593

I don't know what magic you have used, but . . . it seems a hundred years since I left you [it was one week]. . . . I admit that there is every reason to let Love guide me, so I did, with a simplicity that testifies to the reality of my love. . . . *Bonjour, ma souveraine, je baise un million de fois vos belles mains.*

Not content with love letters, the impressionable King burst into rhyme:

*Charmante Gabrielle,  
Percé de mille dards,  
Quand la gloire m'appelle,  
Sous les drapeaux de Mars,  
Cruelle départie!  
Malheureux jour!  
Que ne suis-je sans vie  
Ou sans amour!*

But alas for royal constancy! There is a letter of October 28, 1598, to Gabrielle, "*Mes chères Amours*," that ends, "*Je vous baise un million de fois vos beaux yeux*." Gabrielle died in April, and in October another letter says, "*Mes chères Amours. . . . Bonsoir, le cœur à moi, je baise vous un million de fois*" — and this addressed to Henriette d'Entraques. Follow up the correspondence, and you find that on April 21, 1600, he asks Henriette to return "*la promesse que vous savez*" (to marry her if she bore a son)

and a ring that he had given her. The son was born dead, and the circumspect lover considered himself absolved from the promise. On May 24 he writes to Marie de Médicis, saying that his messenger will unveil his heart and his "*passionnée volonté de vous chérir et aimer toute ma vie comme maîtresse de mes affections*," and that he himself has, by Heaven's design, been born to serve her meritorious self alone. A few months later he is sending to the Marquise de Verneuil a million kisses, and, dutifully, to Marie de Médicis, whom he is soon to marry, one hundred thousand. His first wife, Margot, who had trodden her own primrose path, now consented to a divorce, and Henri IV married Marie de Médicis, niece of the Grand Duke of Tuscany. Everybody knows their romantic relations as told in the great decorative pictures (a subject, like the mythology at Fontainebleau, as has been said, that *fournissait au peintre l'occasion d'admirables nudités*) painted by Rubens for the Luxembourg palace, but which are now among the treasures of the Louvre.

So much for the King's amours. I return to affairs of State. In matters domestic there was great trouble, for the civil wars had left misery and discontent. There were revolts by peasants, and plots by nobles. The Maréchal de Biron was executed. The King's right-hand man was Sully, who took charge of the finances, and much else besides, with remarkable skill, boldness, honesty, and success. He encouraged agriculture and manufacture. He had less sympathy for colonization, for he did not believe that colonies north of 40° latitude could be profitable. In foreign affairs the controlling policy was to resist and break the power of the House of Hapsburg; that was a continuation of the policy of François I. The House of Hapsburg stood like a colossus across Europe, one branch ruling in Spain, Belgium, Luxembourg,

Franche-Comté, Milan, and Naples, and the other ruling in Austria and its dependencies. Together they wielded a power as great as that of Charles V, or greater.

There is a story that Henri IV and Sully had a great plan to unite the Protestant nations, overthrow the House of Hapsburg, and reorganize Europe in fifteen kingdoms or republics; there were to be three religions, Catholic, Lutheran, and Calvinist, and a great central council that should establish universal peace — in fact, a League of Nations. This plan has been doubted. Some historians ascribe it to Sully's musings in his old age; they say it was an old man's imagining. Others believe it, and give the credit to the King. At any rate, nothing came of it, except that Henri IV was on the brink of war with the House of Hapsburg. You see in one of Rubens's pictures the King on the eve of his departure handing the orb of sovereignty to Marie de Médicis. But before he could leave Paris, on May 14, 1610, a fanatical monk, François Ravaillac, an ardent Catholic, crazed in his wits, followed the King's carriage into the narrow rue de la Ferronnerie, overtook it, opposite Number 11, and stabbed the King to death.



## XVII

### LOUIS XIII AND RICHELIEU

As the young King, Louis XIII, was but nine years old, the Queen Mother, Marie de Médicis, became regent. Most people know her better than any other queen of France, except Marie Antoinette, because of Rubens's great pictures (1622-1625) to which I have referred. The series proceeds in chronological order. In the first you see the impression her picture makes upon the susceptible Henri IV; then her landing in Marseilles; her wedding (1600); the birth of Louis XIII at Fontainebleau (1601); the King entrusting her with the regency (1610); and, after the King's death, you see her on an expedition to put down rebels; then the affair of the Spanish marriages (1611); next the Queen committing the ship of state to the young King (1614); her flight from the Château de Blois (1619); and finally, the reconciliation with her son.

I will annotate these pictures a little. Marie de Médicis was a person of very mediocre capacities, and the political situation showed like a porcupine. First as to foreign affairs, you will remember that France was on the brink of war with the House of Hapsburg. As the Queen Regent did not have the same motives as Henri IV for continuing the war, she was conciliatory and made a treaty of peace that involved two royal matches; Louis XIII married Anne d'Autriche, as she is called, daughter to Philip III of Spain, and Philip's son, Philip IV to be, married the daughter of Marie de Médicis. Domestic affairs were more difficult to deal with.

Apprehensions were rife on all sides; the Protestants

feared persecution, the Catholics feared Protestant plots. The great nobles, foremost among them the Prince de Condé, deemed their opportunity at hand, and gave free rein to their ambitions and jealousies. They wished to clip the royal power, and threatened civil war. Sully was forced into retirement, where he wrote his *Mémoires* that end with the account, real or imaginary, of Henri's plan for a League of Nations. Besides Condé and his group, there was the Guise family, and a Florentine adventurer, Concini, who filled his pockets, married the Queen Mother's favorite, insinuated himself into the Queen Mother's good graces, and rose to become a *Maréchal de France*. The rebellious princes thought to profit by a meeting of the States-General, and the Queen Mother, rightly believing that she, and not they, would gain, agreed, and a meeting was convoked, memorable as the last prior to the eventful assemblage in 1789. The three orders could not agree on anything. The *Tiers État* consisted of the *haute bourgeoisie*, of whom three quarters held offices, as magistrates and so forth, under a system known as *la Paulette* — that is, their offices were virtually private property, for them to sell or bequeath. The *noblesse* thought that such inherited dignities infringed upon their patrician prerogatives, and asked that this right of proprietorship should be abolished. Naturally the officeholders, the *noblesse de la robe*, were up in arms, and proposed that the pensions, on which the *noblesse* largely lived, should be curtailed. As for the clergy, they were for the most part ultramontane and fell out with the Gallican *Tiers État*. You see that there was no love lost anywhere. And so the meeting came to a lame and impotent conclusion (1614-1615).

In the course thereof, however, a striking personality came forward. The spokesman for the clergy was a young

bishop, a man of thirty, Armand du Plessis de Richelieu. This speaker, addressing the King, with reference to grievances of the Church, said: "In order that you may understand the justice of her complaints, Your Majesty will, if it so pleases you, consider what reason can exist to keep churchmen out of the honor of participating in your counsels and in the knowledge of your affairs, seeing that their profession fits them particularly for employment therein, inasmuch as it obliges them to be capable, to be honest, and to act with sagacity. . . ." A few years later this bishop entered the royal service. All the world knows his keen, intellectual, delicate face that looks down at you from Philippe de Champagne's portraits.

But now let us go back to Rubens's pictures. That which depicts Marie de Médicis as handing the helm of state to Louis XIII refers, I presume, to his attaining his majority and to her resignation of power, which came in 1617, and in a manner very different from that represented in the picture. Her Majesty had had a girl friend in her childhood at Florence, and this friend had come with her to Paris, and there married the Italian adventurer Concini, who, with the title of Maréchal d'Ancre, became Her Majesty's favorite, to the great displeasure of the high nobility. The young King, too, found Concini hateful, and was encouraged by one of his companions in hawking, afterwards duc de Luynes, to get rid of him. A plan was concocted; Concini was arrested in the palace of the Louvre, and on resisting arrest was shot (April 24, 1617). Concini's wife was beheaded, and her body burned; the Queen Mother was banished to the Château de Blois, and the old counselors of Henri IV were recalled; for Louis adored his father's memory and disliked his mother. Richelieu, who had been brought forward by Concini and made a Secretary of State, deemed it prudent to



*Rubens*

*Prado, Madrid*

MARIE DE MÉDICIS





withdraw. You see that Rubens's picture of the Queen Mother handing the helm of state to her son the King depicts the episode more as it should have been than as it was.

Rubens's next picture shows the Queen Mother escaping from the Château de Blois. It is a pity that he did not take full advantage of the subject to paint her climbing down a rope ladder and rolling down the glacis to the street. The escape was a theatrical affair, for it seems that she was at liberty to go out by the door. But her mode of escape serves to remind us that times were still upside down. The great nobles were jealous of the new favorite, the duc de Luynes, and the Huguenots, excited by the uprising of the Protestants in Germany, were on the verge of revolt.

The next picture portrays the reconciliation between mother and son. Howells, a contemporary Englishman, says: "The mutual demonstration and postures of tenderness which Mother and Son shew'd at their first interview, melted the hearts of all the spectators." And Jean Héroard, the royal physician, who kept a diary of the young King's doings, says that the Queen Mother *l'embrasse, le baise, se prend à pleurer, lui aussi, sans parler l'un et l'autre*. But the King, as I say, did not like his mother, and in spite of this affecting reconciliation kept her in retirement. She busied herself with building the palais du Luxembourg and ordering Rubens to paint for its walls the decorative pictures that have occupied our attention. We may now take at least temporary leave of her, though she continues to play an important rôle, for a new protagonist has come to the front of the stage; Luynes died, and Richelieu, now a cardinal (1622), became first minister of the crown (1624). He was thirty-nine years old. Supple, insinuating, crafty, energetic, resolute,

cold-blooded, high-aspiring, and farsighted, he is reputed to be one of the greatest of French statesmen.

There were two main matters of policy that confronted the government. Within the kingdom the Huguenots, whose rights under the Edict of Nantes had been violated, had organized as an independent body, had fortified La Rochelle, and were either in secession or threatening war; while, without the kingdom, the House of Hapsburg, by the combined action of its two branches, maintained a constant threat against the independence of France. Richelieu had a large majority of the nation at his back. The party of ardent Catholics, heir to the beliefs and traditions of the League, was eager to help him put down the Huguenot rebellion; and the party of ardent patriots, often but not always identical with the other, was also eager to attack the House of Hapsburg. As to all this stirring time I must limit myself to the briefest reference, for both the war against the Huguenots within and the war against the House of Hapsburg without were but a part of the great struggle between the old ecclesiastical order, with its attendant interests, and the new spirit of revolt, which had been going on for a hundred years. The military part of the European struggle is known as the Thirty Years' War (1618-1648). All western Europe had a hand in the fray: Spain, Savoy, the Papacy, Venice, other Italian states, Switzerland, Austria, Bohemia, Hungary, the princes of Germany, Holland, the Spanish Netherlands, England, Denmark, Sweden, and France.

Richelieu was confronted by great difficulties. A zealous churchman, he desired the exaltation of the Pope and the triumph of Catholicism, and at the same time, as a zealous patriot, he desired the aggrandizement and glory of France. These two policies were often at cross-purposes, and perplexed many persons who agreed with

him as to the one ambition and not as to the other. His career falls into two periods — 1624–1629, during which domestic affairs predominate, and 1629–1643, when foreign policy becomes by far the more important. For success in both it was of the first necessity to make the King, and himself as the King's minister, supreme. The dangerous offices of Constable and Admiral were suppressed, and Richelieu himself became "Grand Master, Chief, and Superintendent-General of Navigation and Commerce." There were many obstacles to be pushed aside, — rival courtiers, the Prince de Condé, the Queen Mother, — and there were many skeins of policy to be unraveled; that of colonization, especially in Canada, where Champlain had founded Quebec (1608), there was that of shipping, that of raising a revenue, that of persuading the King, and so on. Of these difficulties the Huguenots, with their *imperium in imperio*, presented the worst; and the crux of this difficulty was that Richelieu, while fighting Protestants at home, was aiding Protestants in Germany. In one case he was putting down rebels, in the other upholding enemies of the enemies of France, but the distinction looked confused to prejudiced minds.

England undertook to aid the rebellious Huguenots. Buckingham sailed with a fleet to the Île de Ré, but failed in his attack and was driven back (1627). This invasion by the English determined Richelieu to capture La Rochelle. He himself took supreme command, and maintained such discipline that he compared his camp to a well-ordered monastery. Buckingham did his best to bring another fleet to the relief of the beleaguered city, but he was murdered, and the fleet arrived too late. The city surrendered, and the political power of the Huguenots was crushed forever (1628).

It is impossible to follow the thread of events in the

dreadful web of European troubles, or even the thread of the lesser web at home. In the latter various people come in: The Queen Mother; Gaston d'Orléans, the King's brother, he that built the incongruous west wing of the Château de Blois; Cinq-Mars, the King's brief favorite, whose unworthy memory has been undeservedly glorified by Alfred de Vigny; and other disturbing personages. Suffice to say that Richelieu suppressed the disorderly *noblesse* with vigor. In the struggle against the House of Hapsburg he allied France to Sweden, Poland, and Turkey — a policy that was continued, in spite of greatly changed circumstances, during most of the eighteenth century, so dominant did Richelieu's reputation become. Nevertheless, he kept out of war at first, aiding the Protestants with subsidies and by indirect means; but the success of the House of Hapsburg required more than that, and France was obliged to join the fray (1635). The great minister died in 1642, and the King, who had supported him loyally and is entitled to share in his glory, soon afterwards, but their policy continued. The Grand Condé, at the age of twenty-two, routed the famous Spanish infantry at Rocroi (1643); and the Peace of Westphalia (1648) not only secured the safety of France by the dismemberment of Germany into three hundred little principalities, but opened the way for her to take the first place in Europe.

With the advent of Richelieu, France passes into a new period, an epoch of transition between the generation that had undergone the terror and tumult of the religious wars, and the generation that was to enjoy peace and quiet under an absolute monarchy. Everything is changed, even the royal dwelling places, for the Court has moved from the châteaux of the Loire to Fontainebleau and the Louvre, now become splendid with the

additions that Catherine de Médicis and Henri IV had made upon the river front. This is the period when Athos, Porthos, and Aramis, musketeers of the King, perform their celebrated feats. The Cardinal came to power in 1624, and it was *le premier lundi du mois d'avril 1625* that a young man named d'Artagnan, *le visage long et brun; la pommette des joues saillante, signe d'astuce; les muscles maxillaires énormément développés, indice infaillible auquel on reconnaît le Gascon*, rode on his singular-looking mount into the market place of Meung on his way to Paris.



## XVIII

### AUTOCRACY AND THE FRONDE (1615-1661)

WITH Cardinal Richelieu the great classic period of French literature and art begins. He unified the nation by crushing the Protestants as a political party, and exalted its spirit by a triumphant assertion of its place in Europe against the seemingly superior strength of the House of Hapsburg. In government he maintained the absolute power of the king; in religion he supported, but not to excess, the ultramontane view of the supremacy of the Pope. Under him, throughout the course of politics, both ecclesiastical and lay, appear the great classical principles of unity, of the subordination of parts, — their mutual relations being determined by logic, and all contributing, in poise and measure, to the harmony and dignity of the whole. It is impossible not to feel the close connection between the absolute monarchy and the prevalence of the classical spirit in literature and the arts, and that Richelieu was a great factor in both.

I do not dispute that the absolute monarchy was in part a reaction from the intolerable disorder of rebellion and civil war, nor that the measured and poised ordinance of arts and letters was largely due to classical influences from Italy and Rome; but, making all allowances for these, Richelieu's spirit pervades and dominates both government and arts, imposing order and restraint. The French people were tired of lawlessness, of waywardness, of wanton disregard of authority; they wanted a law-giver; they wanted the great calm of classic art. Order,

obedience, proportion, measure, harmony, became delightful ideas; Virgil, Horace, the Colosseum, the Apollo Belvedere, appeared to them to be perfection. You find the same principles at work everywhere; reason — the logical relation between member and member — insists upon its right to dominate.

René Descartes, a Poitevin from Touraine, published his *Discours de la méthode* in 1637. In this book he describes his search for a solid foundation for reason to build upon, indubitable, and therefore true, and he hit upon his *cogito ergo sum*. This may seem to us questionable, but it satisfied him and his generation, and from this, as he believed, self-evident truth he proceeds step by step to prove the existence of this world and of a divine power in it. Arithmetic and geometry, the most direct manifestations of reason, are the handmaids of his thought. Cartesianism became very popular in France, both in literature and in society, and tended to subject both literature and art to the discipline of logic.

In literature, Malherbe (1555–1628) may for our purposes be regarded as the pioneer of the classical style in French poetry. We have Boileau's authority for it: *Enfin Malherbe vint*. Malherbe was a Norman. He wrote an ode of welcome to Marie de Médicis on her landing at Marseilles, and secured a place at Court. He thereupon set to work to purify the language, to remove provincial and foreign words, and in particular to *dégasconner* the slovenly speech brought in by Gascons from Henri IV to d'Artagnan, as well as to lop off the extravagances that Ronsard and his disciples had introduced. It has been said of him that *il voulait un rythme impeccable, une forme parfaite*, and that he treated gerundives and participles as if they were affairs of State. But expeditious voyagers down the centuries are usually not

scholars, and the only poem of his that we shall ever care to read is that on the death of M. du Périer's baby girl:

*Mais elle était du monde, où les plus belles choses  
Ont le pire destin;  
Et rose elle a vécu ce que vivent les roses,  
L'espace d'un matin.*

But even here Malherbe cannot forget to lay stress upon the claims of reason, and he asks of the bereaved father,

*Est-ce quelque dédale, où ta raison perdue  
Ne se retrouve pas?*

In 1634 Richelieu, himself a connoisseur and man of letters, founded the French Academy. The forty earliest Immortals started in to subject the French language, so delightfully instinctive and irrational, *prime-sautière*, in the hands of Rabelais and Montaigne, to the control of reason by compiling a dictionary. One of its members in particular, Vaugelas, applied himself single-handed to *nettoyer la langue française des ordures qu'elle avait contractées*.

In this way the rational spirit, beginning with these scholars and culminating in Boileau, as if it dealt with geometry, proceeding logically from the dogmas in Aristotle and in Horace's *Ars Poetica*, prepared the French language for clearness, definiteness, elegance, and, as some think, for a certain aridity. One remembers Byron's petulant remark:

And Boileau, whose rash envy could allow  
No strain which shamed his country's creaking lyre,  
That whetstone of the teeth—monotony in wire!

This purification and ennoblement was not accomplished without opposition, especially when the lawmakers insisted that a play should observe the unities. Here, various valid arguments were advanced in support of the theory: unity of time and unity of place favor the illusion

of reality, while unity of action compels the playwright to concentrate the interest of his plot. There are the same reasons for absolute monarchy. Reason, so understood, and supported by Richelieu, who was keenly interested in the stage, carried the day.

In the autumn of 1636 or 1637, *The Cid* was played in Paris. Rodrigue, the Cid, falls in love with Chimène. Her father insults his. Rodrigue, in honor bound, challenges her father, and kills him,

*Préférant, quelque espoir qu'eût son âme asservie,  
Son honneur à Chimène, et Chimène à sa vie.*

Chimène turns away from the man who has slain her father; but a hope is left that time and the King's wish will finally bring them together. The conflict in him between honor and love, and in her between love for her lover and abhorrence of her father's slayer, presents these neoclassical ideals of nobility and human dignity in their purest form. Lanson says that Corneille follows Descartes in making the passion of love a servant to reason, for love is the desire for good, and, as it is reason that recognizes what is good, therefore reason directs love. However that may be, it is certain that reason dominates the classic spirit.

There was great controversy over *The Cid*. Richelieu, shocked by what he deemed its faults, bade the Academy administer a rebuke. That was done. Corneille was scolded for his style, his neglect of the unities, and his immorality in allowing Chimène to continue to love Don Rodrigue after he had killed her father.

*En vain contre le Cid un ministre se ligue;  
Tout Paris pour Chimène a les yeux de Rodrigue.  
L'Académie en corps a beau le censurer,  
Le public révolté s'obstine à l'admirer.*

But Corneille took the lesson to heart. *Les Horaces* and *Cinna* followed in 1640, *Polyeucte* in 1643, and in each the unities are observed and the academically nobler emotion of religion or patriotism triumphs over human love. Corneille determined the course of French classical drama.

In painting, the same phenomenon takes place. Nicolas Poussin (1594-1665) is, it has been said, "the quintessence of the classical spirit." It is not merely that his subjects are taken from Greek or Roman mythology — bacchantes, Arcadian shepherds, Apollo and the Muses; he is classical by harmony of line and color, by balance and proportion, by melodious design, by the elegance of his composition. *Il est l'artiste cartésien par excellence, intellectuel et volontaire.* Reason prepares his palette, reason directs his brush. It is no mere coincidence that Richelieu made his bold demand for royal favor in 1615 and that Poussin came to Paris the next year. Poussin spent much of his time in Rome, where his native tastes were enriched and developed. Eustache Le Sueur (1616-1655) presents, in lower range, similar qualities. He, too, shows the influences of his stay in Italy. His series of pictures upon Saint Bruno, which you see in the Louvre, are, I think, usually more interesting to the French than to foreigners. Philippe de Champagne (1602-1674), a Fleming by birth, has much of this same classical dignity, but it is less obvious, as his pictures are almost all portraits. Those of Richelieu, of Mère Angélique of Port-Royal, of himself, and of many other distinguished persons, are very familiar to frequenters of the Louvre. On the other hand, the three brothers Le Nain, Louis (1593-1648), Antoine (1598-1648), and Mathieu (1607-1677), perhaps because of their subjects, — peasants at work or in repose, young gentlemen playing at draughts, — seem more under Flemish influence (they came from Laon) and less under that of



Italy, which insisted upon noble outlines and contours. The Academy of Sculpture and Painting was founded in 1648.

Sculpture concerned itself mainly with portraits, and is therefore less obviously classical, though connoisseurs detect Italian influences. Jacques Sarrasin (1592-1665) modeled Cardinal Bérulle, now in the Louvre, and the charming children playing with the goat in the Salle La Caze, as well as the caryatids of the Pavillon de l'Horloge in the court of the Louvre. On the other hand, the architecture of many churches in Paris obviously portrays the classical spirit, the domination of reason. Superimposed orders rise, one over the other, in great dignity, from foundation to dome; see Saint-Paul-et-Saint-Louis (1627-1641) in the rue Saint-Antoine, the Chapelle de la Sorbonne built for Richelieu himself by Lemercier (1635), that of Val-de-Grâce, by François Mansart, or the façade of Saint-Gervais, designed by the architect of the Luxembourg, Salomon de Brosse, and so on. I refer to the outside of these churches only; the inside is very different, and has been described as worthy "of the religion of retired notaries."

But this orderly subjection to certain great principles was not destined to proceed without objection. Within the framework of nobility and harmony, alien fashions, conflicting theories, denials and revolts, showed themselves. In literature, for instance, you find Cyrano de Bergerac, and Scarron with his *Roman comique*; in architecture, you find a touch of the baroque; in sculpture there is the charming *jubé* in Saint-Étienne-du-Mont (1601-1609). These, however, are nothing compared to the unseemly baroque episode that occurred in the intermission between Richelieu and the coming of age of Louis XIV. To us, the Fronde, which takes its name from

boys' slings, looks like an opéra bouffe. In reality it was more than that; it had certain seismic relations with the great rebellion in England, and with revolutionary movements in Naples and Catalonia. Perhaps the simplest way to give an idea of this episode is to present the *dramatis personæ*.

### OPÉRA COMIQUE

#### LA FRONDE, OR THE SELF-SEEKERS

CARDINAL MAZARIN. This Italian was an extremely adroit, intelligent, insinuating man, deeply versed in political intrigues; he had agreeable southern manners and a sweet smile. He owed his elevation to Richelieu, who recognized his talents.

QUEEN ANNE D'AUTRICHE. A Spanish lady, sister to Philip IV, and very much of a *grande dame*; tall, with handsome hands, pious, fond of good food, and furnished with a very mediocre intelligence. She was in love with Mazarin. Some say that they were married.

PRINCE DE CONDÉ, the Great Condé. He was a brilliant, dashing, fearless soldier, gifted with military genius. His early victory over the Spaniards at Rocroi had given him a restless desire for action and glory. You will see in the Louvre his bronze bust, by Coysevox. Condé's head looks like that of a caged eagle. For a time he joined Spain and fought against France, a mildish treason in those days, for which he was forgiven by Louis XIV.

MADAME DE LONGUEVILLE. We meet her in *Le Vicomte de Bragelonne*. She was Condé's sister. She had eyes of turquoise blue, and flaxen hair, and looked far more like an angel than a woman. But the angelic element was under admirable control; she said, "*Je n'aime pas les jeux innocents.*"

LA GRANDE MADemoiselle. She was daughter to the scallawag, Gaston d'Orléans, brother of Louis XIV, a lady of great spirit and bravado, with a weakness for *réclame*.

CARDINAL DE RETZ. A very clever, intriguing, turbulent, charming man, whose *Mémoires* rank as a classic, and give one

a vivid picture of the bad manners and worse morals of the time, as well as the impression that La Fronde was an *opéra bouffe*.

TURENNE. The great soldier.

LA ROCHEFOUCAULD. The writer of the *Maxims*. He drew a great part of his pessimism from the doings of the actors in La Fronde. He was wounded in a fight at the Porte-Saint-Antoine when the Grande Demoiselle ordered cannon fired upon the royal troops.

PARLEMENT DE PARIS. The Parlement is the hero, or at least the chief character, in the piece. It seems to have been excited by the revolutionary part that the English parliament had been enacting, and to have conceived that it ought to possess powers of some similar character. It was in fact a court of justice owing its preëminence over the other parlements of the kingdom to its wider jurisdiction and to its seat at the capital. It had the duty to register royal ordinances, coupled with the right to discuss them and to remonstrate. It now went further and asserted that the right to remonstrate involved the right to reject.

There you have the main *dramatis personæ*, all of whom behave like spoiled children, and the plot is very roughly as follows: The Parlement, now that Richelieu's strong hand was removed, believed that it had its opportunity. It refused, throwing a cloak of unselfish patriotism round its shoulders, to register a royal edict that taxed hereditary offices, in which virtually every member of the Parlement was interested. Other malcontents made common cause with them — great nobles still chafing under Richelieu's heavy curb, property owners indignant over taxation, and others such. There was great talk of reform and liberty. The Court arrested the chief leader in the Parlement. Paris rose in wrath and barricaded the streets. The Court fled to Saint-Germain. The Parlement, protesting loyalty to the young King and that it was merely acting against Mazarin, took up arms. The royal forces

besieged Paris. Then there were embracings and peace-makings, and the rebellious nobles were lavishly rewarded for their submission. But peace did not last long. And the *guerre sans honneur pour personne* broke out again. Altogether La Fronde lasted over four years, 1648-1653. In the end Mazarin returned, pliant and triumphant. He deserved well of the country. The Peace of Westphalia (1648), which ended the 'Thirty Years' War, gave Alsace to France and reduced the Empire to impotence. The Peace of the Pyrenees (1659) ended the war with Spain; and by Mazarin's diplomacy the young King Louis XIV married Maria Theresa, daughter to Philip IV — a marriage fraught with future consequences. You will see in the church wall at Saint-Jean-de-Luz marks that show where the door, cut for the bridegroom to enter, was immediately walled up after his august person had passed out again, a married man.

In 1661 Mazarin died, and Louis XIV assumed the government. He had learned hatred of rebellion, disorder, and disobedience from the Fronde. There is a story told of him that when the Parlement de Paris hesitated to register one of his decrees he rode direct from the hunt to their hall, stalked in, riding whip in hand, and demanded the reason why. The spokesman began, "The State . . ." "*L'État*," the King interrupted, "*c'est moi*." The phrase is legendary except in its embodiment of a fact.

## XIX

### THE REIGN OF LOUIS XIV

THE Fronde had made France eager to welcome any government that had the ability to maintain peace within. She had therefore accepted Mazarin, whom she hated; and now on Mazarin's death she opened her arms to Louis XIV, at that time a youth of twenty-two. Those of us who have listened with credulity to Macaulay have a very wrong notion of *le Roi Soleil*, *le Grand Monarque*, as the French call him. Louis XIV was a remarkable man, with some of those rare qualities possessed also by Cæsar Augustus, which enabled them to make very able men their faithful and humble servants. Lavissee says that his intelligence was mediocre; Sainte-Beuve, that he only possessed good sense, but a great deal of that. One must remember that he was half French, half Spanish, the grandson of Henri IV and the great-grandson of Charles-le-Quint, two very gifted men. Louis's mind as an instrument of pure thought may have been no better than that of the ordinary man, but his good sense, aided by his strong will, his royal ambition, his prudence, his skill in choosing and using men, his self-control, his willingness to take pains and work hard, his iron pride, made him a very exceptional king. As a man, he was not lovable or admirable; he was a bully, he was perfidious, and in time became absorbed in the cult of himself. But his clear understanding, his love of order, his sense of greatness, his essentially Latin nature, were in harmony with the great classical movement of his century, *le siècle de Louis XIV*, and he helped that movement to produce its rich harvest.



But before setting about an enumeration of those intellectual achievements, it will be well to indicate the frame of politics. The state of Europe was this: the German Empire had been reduced to a discordant multitude of little states under the nominal sovereignty of the Austrian Hapsburgs; Italy also continued to be parceled up; Spain was on the road downhill, but still owner of what is now Belgium; England, after a period of no account in European politics during her civil war, had come up under Cromwell to be of the first importance, but only to descend again after the Restoration, when Charles II became a pensioner of France; Holland was a vigorous maritime power, but small. Under these circumstances, France, full of energy and vigor, the most powerful country in Europe, attempted to round out her territories and push them to what, as I have said, some Frenchmen call "our historic" or "our natural boundaries." And, indeed, according to a map, the river Rhine looks as if Providence had intended it to be a boundary. France therefore wished for Flanders, the Belgium of to-day, Franche-Comté, which had been a bit of old Burgundy, Lorraine, normally a fief of the Empire, as well as Alsace, which had been ceded to her by the treaty of Westphalia. It is said that Vauban, the great military engineer, indicated the proper lines for defensive boundaries, and that Louis XIV endeavored to obtain them. At any rate, war after war was the consequence.

In these affairs, after the death of Mazarin, the King had three distinguished advisers — Nicolas Fouquet, the *surintendant des finances*, Michel Le Tellier, and Hugues de Lionne. Fouquet was a notable prestidigitator with money; he had made a large fortune for himself, and aspired to be Mazarin's successor. The King did not propose to have any subject powerful enough to commence

another Fronde, and, on the charge of speculation, arrested Fouquet without warning. Madame de Sévigné's letters tell a great deal about the trial; she leads one to believe that the prosecution was grossly unfair. The King was resolute for conviction; and accordingly Fouquet was convicted and imprisoned for the rest of his life. The people applauded, and the officers of the crown learned that they had a master with whom there was no trifling. The leader in Fouquet's overthrow was Jean-Baptiste Colbert, a remarkable statesman and administrator. His tireless energy concerned itself with all the internal affairs of the kingdom. There was need of his abilities; the finances were in sad disorder, the taxes were unequal and irregular, and fell almost wholly upon the poor. Colbert's policy was to encourage agriculture, manufacture, and commerce, and above all to make the nation work; he also did his best to bring order into a confused mass of laws and edicts. Michel Le Tellier was Secretary of State for war, laborious, intelligent, and full of new ideas; perhaps he is entitled to the major share of the renown that has fallen to his son, Louvois, who succeeded to his post. Hugues de Lionne was an accomplished diplomat, with a wide knowledge of European politics. These three, Colbert, Louvois, Lionne, were the King's chief counselors at the zenith of his glory.

Wars followed on one another's heels, with the Turks (1664), with England (1666), with Spain (1667). Louis's ambition to run his northeast boundary to the Rhine caused poor Belgium (the Spanish Netherlands) to become one series of battlefields. Holland, England, and Sweden made a triple alliance to oppose the aggressor, and the Empire lent a hand. There are few chronicles so sad and tedious as those of unnecessary wars. There was fighting in Flanders, in Franche-Comté, along the Rhine; Turenne,

under the orders of Louvois, ravaged the Palatinate. At last the Peace of Nimwegen gave a breathing space.

Out of this hurly-burly of war and diplomacy, where death, devastation, and glory stalked triumphant, France issued forth as the dominant Power, with her king the first potentate in Europe. And while Colbert, Louvois, and Lionne in the closet, and Turenne and Condé in the field, were lifting Louis XIV up on the pedestal of political and military renown, other men of genius had been constructing a more enduring monument in literature and art.

In literature one's first thought is, What prodigious variety, tragedy, comedy, sermons, satire, stories, romances, maxims, memoirs, letters, religious tracts, and what not! I will mention some names in the order of chronology. Paul Scarron (1610-1660) was the son of a member of the Parlement of Paris, at the time that Richelieu handled that body of jealous jurists rather roughly. In retaliation they refused for eighteen months to register the letters patent that created the Académie Française. It was beneath their dignity, old Scarron said, adding, "It reminds me of that Roman emperor who consulted the Senate as to sauce for his turbot." Young Scarron, partly to escape his stepmother, went to Rome. There he saw Nicolas Poussin living in quiet happiness with his wife, walking off to draw the grand lines of a Roman ruin or the classical forms of the peasants of the Campagna. Back in Paris, a charming, witty young man, he gave himself to the gay life of a *bel esprit*. On a sudden, some poison twisted his handsome young body into crooked shapelessness. From that time on, Scarron, with his big blue eyes, sat in a chair, wrote gay verses, though at periods he could not use his hands, and mocked his griefs. So he lived gallantly, as one of his acquaintances said, "bearing witness against the softness of mankind." A friend took

him to see the Queen, Anne d'Autriche. Scarron asked her to lodge him in the Louvre: "This is an excellent opportunity for Your Majesty to found a general hospital at little cost, for I have all the ills to be found in a well-stocked hospital." He received a pension. During the Fronde, Cardinal de Retz used to visit him frequently; they railed together at Mazarin. Scarron also wrote verses at the expense of Cyrano de Bergerac, a valiant Gascon and man of letters, who has become so famous in the hands of Edmond Rostand. When Mazarin came back to power the pension stopped, but the rich Fouquet granted another from his own purse. There are two things in particular that link the life of this valiant cripple to the history of France. One is his *Roman comique* (1651), a romance of love and adventure, rowdy, but full of situations, *l'œuvre d'un homme gai et d'un homme bon, chose vraie, chose éternelle*, but not very easy reading for the hasty traveler. The second is this. A wild fellow, Constant d'Aubigny, son to a man known in French literature, married while in prison, and then started for Martinique with his wife and baby girl Francine (1635). The baby became very ill. Judged dead, it was wrapped in a flag and about to be cast overboard. The mother asked to see it once again. It was living. Back in France this girl, at sixteen, married the poor cripple, Paul Scarron. She was intelligent, sweet, kind, gentle, and very beautiful, and made him a good wife. A neighbor, Pierre Mignard, came in to paint her. Many other people of distinction also came to their modest ménage; Madame de Sévigné was one, and Ninon de Lenclos another. In reward, perhaps, for her goodness to this poor fellow, a strange fortune befell her, and she is known to history as Madame de Maintenon, wife to Louis XIV.

Cardinal de Retz (1613-1679), during the noisy period

of the Fronde, as I have said, frequented Scarron. He cast his lot in with the losing side, but, succeeding to the archbishopric of Paris, he was a man to be reckoned with. He lived in exile, came back; abdicated his mitre, made friends with Molière, Boileau, and other wits, and obtained some official employment. But his great days were those of the Fronde, when he played the gamester. His *Mémoires* have their place in French literature; they describe with real brilliance the actors in the Fronde, and even to-day are appropriate to autumnal evenings, a wood fire, and slippered ease.

François VI de la Rochefoucauld (1613-1689) was a great noble. His education began early; at thirteen he was a soldier, at fifteen a husband, at seventeen an attendant upon the court of Anne d'Autriche. He conspired against Richelieu, he fought against Mazarin — partly because of a natural sympathy with the rebellious princes, partly because Mazarin had not taken what he deemed proper notice of him. He withdrew to the country, and accepted money from the widely generous Fouquet. Coming back to Paris, he frequented the salon of charming Madame de Sablé, where it was the fashion to write epigrams. He adopted the fashion, composed a book of them, talked them over with his charming and clever hostess, and published them in 1665. The *Maxims* are usually considered to be the reflexions of a disappointed man. They are the product of a time when ethics were not well settled, when it was still uncertain whether the well-being of the individual or of society should determine virtues and vices, and it is hardly fair to judge them by our present standard, now that social stability has turned the scales wholly in favor of society, and social qualities have become good and egotistical qualities bad. The *Maxims* record Rochefoucauld's observations in words



chosen with an accuracy as nearly perfect as may be — clear, concise, elegant, temperate: “*On a toujours la force de supporter les maux d’autrui. . . . L’intérêt parle toute sorte de langues, même celle de désintéressé. . . . Les vertus se perdent dans l’intérêt, comme les fleuves dans la mer.*”

Another monument of French literature, which illustrates a very different aspect of the national character, was published eight or nine years earlier. Its author, Blaise Pascal (1623–1662), is one of the most interesting exponents of the French mind. He was born in Clermont-Ferrand, where he must often have wandered into the old Romanesque church of Notre-Dame-du-Port, so serious, so charming, so seemingly capricious, and so religious. He early manifested a genius for mathematics, and fell ill from overwork. By chance he overheard some of his father’s friends talk of Jansenism, and conceived a great interest in it. Jansenism gets its name from a Dutch theologian, Jansenius, who asserted in a learned Latin volume the doctrine of grace that he believed is to be found in Saint Augustine’s writings — that God grants grace to whom He will, that with it a man of necessity is saved, without it he cannot be. This, to the misinstructed mind, borders upon Calvinism. Antoine Arnauld, a distinguished doctor of the Sorbonne, took up the doctrine, and, full of the solemn spirit engendered by it, published, soon after Richelieu’s death, a treatise that asserted the stern and dreadful seriousness of religion. The Catholic Church had been very solicitous to make her doctrines pleasant to any who might be tempted towards the snares of Lutheranism, and perhaps Saint François de Sales (1567–1622) may have made the road to Heaven appear a little too much of a primrose path, and Saint Vincent de Paul (1576–1660) may have laid too much stress on kindness

to the sick, to prisoners, to children, to all who are desolate and oppressed. The new doctrine of Jansenism was for men of tough fibre, not wholly unlike Scotch Covenanters. This doctrine of grace certainly seems inconsistent with any need of a church, a priesthood, or sacraments, and also it seems to free the elect from the necessity of good conduct, and to suggest to the non-elect that they had better have a good time while they can. Nevertheless, the austere ideal of duty and self-denial, the difficulty of adjusting one's relations with a stern God, appealed to many of the nobler sort.

At the convent of Port-Royal, near Chevreuse, scarce twenty miles from Paris, Antoine Arnauld's sister Jacqueline-Marie Arnauld, Sœur Angélique, became at an absurdly early age the Mother Superior. Here we are brought back to the walls of the Louvre, where Philippe de Champagne's admirable portraits of this saintly lady hang. This convent grew into a goodly garden of Jansenism; pious men gathered together in the neighborhood. Eighteen members of the brilliant Arnauld family were there. Worldly persons also drew about it. Cardinal de Retz flirted with it; Madame de Sablé, La Rochefoucauld's friend, as she grew older, frequented it. But the government was hostile. The State had had enough of sects that developed into political parties. The King disliked anything like a schism, and the Jesuits were alarmed, jealous, and suspicious. Certain propositions concerning grace, said to be those of Jansenism, were taken to Rome. The Pope first condemned the propositions, and then proclaimed that they were contained in Jansenius. His decisions caused great disputes.

At this time, among other distressed and hungry souls, Blaise Pascal had drifted to Port-Royal. He took up the cudgels for Jansenism and wrote *Les Provinciales* (1656-57),

letters that began with a discussion of the doctrine of grace but quickly turned into an attack upon the Jesuits. The letters were not wholly just, but they were brilliant, eloquent, ironical, deadly, and perhaps have done more than any one other thing to defame that illustrious society. There is, I suppose, nothing like them in any language. Pascal's other great book, *Les Pensées*, his thoughts on religion, was not published till after his death (1670). It is, one may say, pending the definite triumph of the mechanistic theory, a book of permanent significance. "*Le silence éternel des espaces infinis m'effraye.*"

Two years after the *Lettres Provinciales* were published, Molière and his company played *Les Précieuses ridicules* in Paris. Molière (1622-1673) is, perhaps, if one is to give rank as teachers do in colleges and schools, the greatest name in French literature. He was born in Paris; his father, Jean Poquelin, was a sort of upholsterer in the King's service. The son did not take to his father's trade, and therefore was sent to a Jesuit school. He seems to have studied law and to have been admitted to the Bar. These early years are obscure. At the age of twenty he met in the provinces a young actress, Madeleine Béjart, who acted in a company of players; he fell in love with her, and that attachment seems to have determined his career. They founded a company a little later. It was there that Molière and our acquaintance, the painter Mignard, became friends. The troop, after touring the provinces, went to Paris. In 1658 Monsieur, the King's brother, patronized them. The next year they played both in the Louvre and before ill, old Mazarin in his palace. In 1661 the players were lodged in the Palais-Royal, where they gave *L'École des maris*, a great success that "charmed all Paris." It was the first play Molière published. That summer, at the request of the million-

aire Fouquet, he composed the *Fâcheux*, a piece for ballets, a favorite form of entertainment with His Majesty, and Charles Le Brun, the great dictator of all the arts, painted the decorations. The play was given at the Château de Vaux on August 17. It was kindly applauded. La Fontaine was there, and wrote of Molière :

*Cet écrivain par sa manière  
Charme à présent toute la cour,*

. . . . .  
*Et maintenant il ne faut pas  
Quitter la nature d'un pas.*

On September 5 Fouquet was arrested and disgraced. But Molière continued to prosper. In 1662 he married Armande Béjart, a pretty, flirtatious girl of twenty. Exactly who Armande was is not certain, for the Béjart family was casual in those matters. She was probably a sister, perhaps a daughter, of Madeleine, who (so slander said) *faisait la bonne fortune de quantité de jeunes gens du Languedoc* at the time that Molière made her acquaintance. The tragedy of this marriage is well known ;

But, O, what damned minutes tells he o'er,  
Who dotes yet doubts, suspects yet strongly loves.

His masterpieces followed one another — *L'École des femmes*, 1662; *Le Festin de Pierre*, that is, *Don Juan*, 1665; *Le Misanthrope*, 1666; *Le Médecin malgré lui* and *Tartufe*, 1667; *George Dandin* and *L'Avare*, 1668. At the Château de Chambord, in a portion of the great hall given up for a stage, he played that delightfully gay piece, *Monsieur de Pourceaugnac*, 1669; *Le Bourgeois gentil-homme* followed in 1670, *Les Femmes savantes* in 1672. In playing *Le Malade imaginaire* he was taken very ill. He had been warned not to act, but he asked what the journey-

men actors would do for their daily bread if he stopped playing. The effort was too much. He died that night (February 1673). I will end this chapter with a reference to Madame de Sévigné (1626–1696). To her is usually accorded the first place in the charming art of letter writing. No one tires of praising her easy mastery of familiar language, her art, her humor, her vivacity, and her sensitiveness. She was well educated, too, as the phrase is — read Virgil, Ariosto, and Tasso, Quintilian, Tacitus, Saint Augustine, Descartes, and Rabelais. She admired Pascal, and was a close friend to Cardinal de Retz, to Foquet, and to others whom we meet on the highroad of history. Her letters, of which there are fourteen pretty little volumes, mostly written to her daughter, tell of everything going on — of the Court and its doings, of ministers, the theatre, religion, of the gossip of society, and so forth, in a style suited to her subject. At eighteen she married a fashionable ne'er-do-weel, who was killed in a duel a few years later. Everybody knows her house in Paris, l'Hôtel Carnavalet, where you see her blond face in pastel, and a portrait of her daughter Madame de Grignan, by Pierre Mignard. In the country she passed part of the time at the Château des Rochers, some twenty miles east of Rennes in Brittany, part at Livry near Paris. Of all the literature of the seventeenth century, excepting Molière, Madame de Sévigné's letters seem the least touched by the hand of time.



## XX

### LOUIS XIV (*Continued*)

ONE chapter is not enough to describe the masterpieces that France, pushed on by the impulsive force of national prosperity and self-confidence under the great King, produced during the latter half-century.

In the year 1668, the year that the Archbishop's ban drove *Tartufe* from the public stage in Paris and Molière was obliged to act it at Chantilly under the protection of the great Condé, La Fontaine published his first collection of fables. La Fontaine was born at Château-Thierry in 1621. There he spent his early manhood, an idle, shiftless loon in all matters except verse, careless of his duties towards his wife — he was twenty-seven, she fourteen, when they were married — and towards his office of forester. He wandered to Paris, abandoning wife and office, *presque sans s'en apercevoir*, as his biographer says. Fouquet, the Mæcenas of the time, granted him a pension. In return the penurious poet was obliged to be ready with occasional verses. This period passed all too soon, for Fouquet was arrested, the magnificent Château de Vaux, with its royal splendors, was abandoned, and the parasites had to shift for themselves. To his honor be it said, La Fontaine begged the King to show mercy to his patron :

*Il est assez puni par son sort rigoureux,  
Et c'est être innocent que d'être malheureux.*

After this there is nothing in his life worth remembering, except that he was a friend of Molière's, and of two younger men, Boileau and Racine. Everybody knows the

Fables — *Maître Corbeau sur un arbre perché; Les deux Pigeons, La Laitière et le pot-au-lait; Le Renard et les raisins*; and so on. His powers of description, his philosophy, his portrayal of character, his wit, and the *ars celare artem* of his brilliant style, are nonpareil. La Fontaine took his plots wherever he found them, and then, using a copious vocabulary, taken from everywhere high and low, from the city and the country, from Montaigne, Amyot, Marot, and Rabelais whom he loved, he composed with exquisite art, shifting his rhythm and metre to suit his subject, the little poems that are so full of observation, of joy in life, and of good sense.

Boileau (1636-1711) was another of these men each supreme in his different sphere. He is less sympathetic to most foreigners, and perhaps it is necessary to acquire a French sensibility, as it is with Racine, in order to appreciate him according to the generous French measure. His poetry, it is agreed, is of no high order; at best it gives little genre pictures of bourgeois existence — somewhat, it seems, after the fashion of a Dutch painter. He was born and lived all his life in Paris. He was admitted to the Bar, but did not practise. He gave himself up to a literary life, and became great friends with Molière, La Fontaine, and Racine. These four would meet two or three times a week, at his house in rue du Colombier, or at the Cabaret du Mouton Blanc, or maybe at the Pomme de Pin or the Croix de Lorraine, and talk literature, rail at inferior poets, and agree as to what right reason prescribes. He liked good wine and a good dinner, and was also on very close terms with the charming actress, La Champmeslé, who played to perfection Hermione in Racine's play *Andromaque*. This actress was not beautiful, but her bearing was noble, and her voice touched the hearts of her audience; Racine's heart as well, — "*M.*

*Racine n'aime rien tant que — votre charmante personne,*" — and the hearts of so many others that the beautiful Ninon de Lenclos took it in ill part. La Fontaine wrote to La Champmeslé:

*Vous regnerez long-tems dans la mémoire  
Après avoir regné jusques icy  
Dans les esprits, dans les cœurs même aussi.*

Perhaps from these conversations on what is correct in poetry grew his *Art Poétique* (1674); here reason bridles Pegasus and bids him walk, trot, gallop on the highroad, as if he were at the head of a military parade. One wonders what Marlowe, Shelley, or Burns would say about these rules. At any rate, they are clear, and admirably cast into sentences that stick in well-ordered memories. One feels that the tame neoclassical, conventional spirit that planned Versailles is at work here; and one finds that spirit again tricked out in more delicate, more sentimental, more romantic aspects in Racine. It is said that in tragedy Racine realized Boileau's ideals.

Racine (1639-1699) was born in Champagne. He studied at Beauvais, and then at Port-Royal, where an aunt was one of the nuns. There he learned Sophocles and Euripides by heart. At nineteen or twenty he went to Paris, made the acquaintance of Molière, La Fontaine, and Boileau, wrote verses, was received at Court, and tried his hand at a play. Unfortunately, he fell out with Molière, who had undertaken to act his play *Alexandre*. Not liking the way Molière's troupe played it, he transferred it, without warning, to a rival troupe at the Hôtel de Bourgogne. He also persuaded a young actress in whom he was interested, Mlle. du Parc, to leave Molière and go to the Hôtel de Bourgogne. He was at that time a handsome fellow, *la bouche ironique et voluptueuse, de beaux*

*yeux prompts aux larmes.* Naturally, Molière was vexed. Nevertheless, when Paris received *Les Plaideurs* with disfavor and critics were loud against it, Molière defended it and said it was a good comedy. This romance of Racine's was brief, and, according to his son, purely platonic. Mlle. du Parc was fickle, and fell in love with a braggadocio, M. de Tonnerre; the wits said of her that *le Tonnerre l'avait déracinée*. There was also Mlle. de Champmeslé, you remember. Anatole France says that women completed the education which Port-Royal had begun: "*Elles exercèrent en lui cette souplesse harmonieuse, cette sensibilité fine, cette profonde intelligence du cœur humain qui fut le meilleur de son génie. Les femmes alors étaient telles que la société française les avait faites, altières, coquettes, souveraines.*"

Racine's plays followed one another in rapid succession — *Les Plaideurs*, his only comedy (1668); *Bérénice* (1670); *Bajazet* (1672); *Mithridate* (1673); *Iphigénie* (1674); *Phèdre*, written for La Champmeslé (1677). But success had sowed jealousy and discord. Enemies had a rival *Phèdre* written and played at the same time. The duchesse de Bouillon, a niece of Mazarin, headed the opposition. Satires and backbitings went to and fro. Boileau came to Racine's help. Threats of cudgeling spread abroad; but the Grand Condé stepped in, declared that Racine and Boileau were his friends, and that he would treat offenses to them as done to himself. Racine was very sensitive to criticism, and this hostility seems to have reawakened the old religious feelings bred in him when a boy at Port-Royal. He regretted the vanity of his life, renounced the theatre, went back to Port-Royal to his aunt the nun and threw himself at the old lady's feet. He wished to enter a monastery, but his confessor induced him instead to marry.

He married a good woman, who had never read his plays, and he became a gentleman of the King's bed-chamber, and Royal Chronicler; but the seriousness of Port-Royal wrapped him round. Madame de Maintenon asked him for a play, to be acted at her girls' school at Saint-Cyr; he wrote *Esther* (1689), with its delicate parallel between the career of Esther and Madame de Maintenon. It was a great success. Madame de Sévigné wrote: "*Racine s'est surpassé, il aime Dieu comme il aimait ses maîtresses.*" A little later *Athalie* was also acted privately at Saint-Cyr. But Madame de Maintenon's spiritual adviser deemed that sort of thing reprehensible, and Racine wrote no more. He died in 1699, *le plus parfait des poètes français*, according to Anatole France, who always becomes lyrical when he speaks of Racine. "O doux et grand Racine! le meilleur, le plus cher des poètes! . . . Vous êtes mon amour et ma joie, tout mon contentement, et mes plus chères délices. C'est peu à peu, en avançant dans la vie, en faisant l'expérience des hommes et des choses, que j'ai appris à vous connaître et à vous aimer. Corneille n'est près de vous qu'un habile déclamateur, et je ne sais si Molière lui-même est aussi vrai que vous, o maître souverain, en qui réside toute vérité et toute beauté. . . . Que sont les femmes de Sophocle et de Shakespeare, auprès de celles que vous avez animées? Des poupées!" It is hard, however, for those bred upon Shakespeare, on *Hamlet*, *King Lear*, *Macbeth*, *Othello*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, to approach these French tragedies with a sympathetic ear. I venture the more to bring in Shakespeare because that *poète délicieux*, Théodore de Banville, supported by Jean Richepin, divided humanity into two classes — *ceux qui aiment Shakespeare, et les mufles*. We have not been trained and disciplined in the preliminaries necessary to admiration. The long Alexandrine verses sound like the



latter end of a sermon after the canonical twenty minutes are up. But the fault is ours. To the French, Boileau's rules are not crutches, but feathered sandals. The carefully selected words — Racine has a very small vocabulary — all help to produce an impression of solemn and noble beauty, the twelve-syllabled verses march with a dignity that a lesser line could not attain. The cæsura aids the comprehension,

*Que toujours, dans vos vers, le sens coupant vos mots,  
Suspende l'hémistiche, en marque le repos,*

the successions of masculine and feminine rhymes give finish and elegance, and all work together to produce a more telling effect of tragic beauty on the audience.

The same year of the Peace of the Pyrenees (1659), two years before Fouquet's fall, the great preacher Bossuet (1627-1704) established himself in Paris. He was born at Dijon. He studied there, and at the Collège de Navarre in Paris, where, the year before the Fronde, he delivered the thesis for his baccalaureate in the presence of the Great Condé. After being ordained priest, he had gone to Metz, a city full of Protestants and Jews. For ten years he preached in Paris, and then, appointed preceptor to the Dauphin, spent ten years more in imparting information to that unintelligent prince. For him he wrote the *Discours sur l'histoire universelle*. He taught the Dauphin most things personally, including Terence to guard him *des pièges de la volupté et des femmes*. After that he was made bishop of Meaux. He passed his life in pastoral duties, in preaching, in controversies, seeking to spread a knowledge of God, being sure that if a man had a true knowledge of God he would do right.

Most of us think of Bossuet as a great orator, defending, maintaining, spreading his faith, in rather thunderous

manner. His most famous works are his funeral orations : *On Henrietta, Widow of Charles I*; *On Henrietta of England, Daughter of Charles I*; *On the Great Condé*; and so on. These majestic orations, to us hurried readers of to-day, seem too much akin to the great wigs and magnificent millinery of the epoch, a little theatrical, a little magniloquent. Look at Rigaud's portrait of Louis XIV, a monument of the valet's art, and you understand that when the King was of the audience an orator must rise to what His Majesty should consider the occasion demanded. This sometimes brought Bossuet to the brink of exaggeration. For instance, in the oration on the younger Henrietta, at one time a member of the Church of England, the orator suggests that the toppling of her father's throne was necessary to send her to France, where she learned the true faith : "*Pour la donner à l'église, il a fallu renverser tout un grand royaume.*" But he had eloquence, sensibility, imagination, and practical sense. He is interesting to us rather as a great figure, without whom that *grand siècle* would have been distinctly poorer, than as a man.

One other great churchman must be mentioned — Fénelon (1651–1715), who presents, at least to the mind of Protestant Americans, a character of sweetness and light of a far greater attractiveness. Fénelon came of a noble family of Périgord. You can still see the high walls of the château, its great trees and general aspect of lordly and noble melancholy. He took orders, held various charges, and when he was thirty-seven was entrusted with the education of the duc de Bourgogne, son to the Dauphin whom Bossuet had instructed, and destined to become the father of Louis XV. In 1695 he was appointed to the archbishopric of Cambrai — an apparent favor that concealed his disgrace at Court. In order to understand the reasons

of his disgrace, it is necessary to make a digression into ecclesiastical affairs.

These were in a vexatious condition. In the first place, there were the Huguenots. Ever since they had ceased to have any political power, the jealous Catholics had been ousting them of privileges granted by the Edict of Nantes — a right was taken away here, a restriction was added there. Finally the King, who was a bigot himself, yielded to the importunities of other bigots, including probably Madame de Maintenon, whom he had just married, and revoked the Edict. A great number of Huguenots emigrated — some say 150,000, others 500,000 or more. Those who stayed and were converted against their will, as you may imagine, were not grateful in their hearts. That was one source of annoyance to the King. Then there were the Jansenists — a second vexation. In spite of Pascal's polemics, they had been worsted by the Jesuits, expelled from Port-Royal, and maltreated in one way and another. But they were by no means extinguished. Besides these, Gallicanism was always a source of unrest. This doctrine, as I have said, means an assertion of national rights against the universal sovereignty of the Papacy. The Gallicans maintained that an ecumenical council was superior to the Pope, that the authority of bishops was due to their succession to the apostles, and was not derived from the Pope, that the powers of the Papacy were limited by ancient canon, and so on — all the inevitable disagreements involved in the conflict between national and international ecclesiastical interests. Of course, this often placed many churchmen, Bossuet among them, in an embarrassing situation. And now, in addition to these annoying disagreements, a fourth came tumbling in.

Molinos, a Spanish priest living at Rome, proclaimed a

doctrine known as Quietism, which taught a state of complete surrender to the incoming divine Spirit, and a consequent union of the soul with God. Then the soul, being glorified as if in Heaven already, could do no wrong, and would pay little heed to creeds, to ecclesiastical rites, to the conventions of society or to the rules of ethics; at least, to unfriendly critics such seemed the logical consequences of Quietism. Rome condemned Molinos (1687). In France, Madame Guyon, whom some people looked upon as a mystic and a woman of remarkable holiness, adopted his doctrines. The marriage of her daughter to Fouquet's son, the Marquis de Vaux, brought her into relation with various distinguished people, chief among them Madame de Maintenon, who, eager to give her girls at Saint-Cyr the fullest spiritual life, lent an ear to her teaching. Some ecclesiasts, however, had their misgivings. Bossuet and two others were appointed to pass judgment. The committee condemned certain doctrines believed to be found in Madame Guyon's books and, beyond that, certain excesses to which mysticism might lead, rather than mysticism itself. In short, Bossuet declared himself against her, and thereupon Fénelon, her friend, came to her rescue. The two men differed profoundly in temperament. Bossuet was the apostle of reason, order, and ecclesiastical propriety; Fénelon was a sort of Platonist, naturally disposed to find the mystical doctrines of personal communion and intimacy with God both noble and beautiful. The religious world took sides; there was great talk and excitement. The controversy was referred to Rome. The King, becoming every day more conventionally pious, and very jealous of religious dissent, put Fénelon on bounds at Cambrai and requested Rome to condemn his views. Rome hesitated, for Rome had no liking for Bossuet, who had advocated extreme Gallican doctrines, but the King,

naturally a bully as I have said, was imperious, and Fénelon was condemned, and remained in disgrace, in his quasi exile at Cambrai, for the rest of his life.

One's sympathy is wholly with Fénelon. He was a man of great personal charm, with rare powers of winning friendship, sincerely religious and spiritual-minded, and withal a *grand seigneur*. Tradition holds him for a saint; and his letters are such as a saint, if he had literary gifts, would write. He left a number of books. *Télémaque* (1699) is the most famous. It is a poetical romance of Télémaque in search of his father, but it is full of implied criticism upon luxury, upon war and conquest. Lanson says that *il faut le lire dans l'innocence de la première jeunesse* to appreciate its charm; *il faut le lire dans la maturité lorsque l'on connaît bien l'histoire de la société française, pour en comprendre l'importance historique*.

One other writer remains to be mentioned — La Bruyère (1645–1698). His book *Les Caractères* is one of those that have a place in a “gentleman's library.” He is what is called a moralist, that is, a writer who describes the people of his time rather to their detriment, — nobles, courtiers, ministers, bankers, bourgeois, ladies, — with reflections and comments. It is halfway between a book of adages and a novel; there are characters, but no plot. It is hardly a tourist's book. Bruyère was a Parisian, born and bred, and became preceptor of a grandson of the Great Condé. He therefore saw the world of distinction and fashion at Chantilly — Fénelon, for instance; and literary men as well — Molière, La Fontaine, Boileau. The Châtelet, — a part of the present palace, — you remember was built for Anne de Montmorency by Jean Bullant, and had been recently added to by François Mansart, and the gardens were designed by Le Nôtre. It was a rival to any royal palace. Madame



de Sévigné knew the place well, and in one of her letters tells of an incident that happened there and throws light on the character of the King's court.

To Madame de Grignan

April 26, 1671

It is Sunday. This letter will not go till Wednesday; but it is not a letter, but a tale that Moreuil has just told me for your benefit as to what took place at Chantilly concerning Vatel — Vatel, *le grand Vatel*, once *maître d'hôtel de M. Fouquet*. I wrote you on Friday that he had killed himself. Here are the details. The King arrived on Thursday evening. The hunt, the lanterns, the moonlight, the promenade, the banquet served in a spot carpeted with jonquils — all was perfect. At some of the tables there was not enough roast to go round, because of some unexpected guests. Vatel was very much upset; he said several times, "My honor is lost; I shall never get over this mortification." And he said to Gourville, "My head is giddy — I have n't slept for twelve nights; help me to arrange everything." Gourville comforted him as well as he could; but the deficit of roast — not at the King's table, but at one of the lower tables — stayed uppermost in his thoughts. Gourville went and told Monsieur le Prince [the Great Condé]. Monsieur le Prince went up to Vatel's room, and said, "Vatel, everything is all right; there was never anything so good as the King's supper." Vatel answered, "Monseigneur, your goodness is too much for me; I know that the roast did not get to two tables." "Nothing of the sort," the Prince said. "Don't worry; it's all right." At four o'clock in the morning Vatel went all about, and found everybody asleep, except a little purveyor who had only two baskets of fish. "Is that all?" he asked. The peddler, who did not know that Vatel had sent to every seaport in France, answered, "Yes, sir." Vatel waited for a time; no other purveyors came. His head grew dizzy; he thought there would be no more fish. He went to Gourville and said, "Monsieur, I shall not survive this mortification; my honor, my reputation, are at stake." Gourville laughed at him. Vatel went to his

room, propped his sword against the door, and ran it through his heart. Two thrusts failed, but the third killed him. Fish were coming in from everywhere, and the servants were looking for Vatel to give orders about it; they went to his room, pushed against the door, and broke it open. He was found drenched in his own blood. They ran to tell Monsieur le Prince, who felt very badly. Monsieur le Duc [Condé's son] wept, for his trip into Burgundy revolved round Vatel. Monsieur le Prince told the King very sorrowfully. The courtiers said that it was because he had had honor of a fashion, and praised him; some praised and some blamed his courage. The King said that for five years he had been putting off his visit to Chantilly, because he knew what immense trouble it would give. [The fête cost 180,000 livres.] He told Monsieur le Prince that he should not have had more than two tables, and not undertaken the whole thing, and vowed that he would not permit Monsieur le Prince to use up his substance in this manner. But it was too late for poor Vatel. However, Gourville tried to make up for the loss of Vatel. The loss was made up. The dinner was excellent; the guests feasted, supped, walked about, played cards, went hunting, and everything was fragrant with jonquils. Yesterday, Saturday, there was the same over again. . . .

## XXI

### THE ARTS UNDER LOUIS XIV

*L'expression de la monarchie est le classicisme.* In 1660 the Academy at Rome was founded, in 1671 l'Académie d'Architecture, in 1667 l'Académie de Musique; the Academy of Painting had existed for some time, as I have said. Good sense, right reason, the cultivated taste of the few, must impose themselves on the natural human tendency to err and stray. The right reason of antiquity had solved the chief problems of art, had discovered certain principles, had laid down certain dogmas. Young men who felt drawn towards the sculptor's chisel or the painter's brush must bow their heads, must go to school and learn. When an artist had an idea, there were his rules ready at hand to enable him to give his idea a fit habitation. The masters in their several arts were all in accord; Racine composed a tragedy, Bossuet a funeral oration, Jules Hardouin-Mansart designed a façade, Le Nôtre laid out a garden, on the same principles of harmony, measure, of well-bred taste. And much of first-rate excellence in various fields was done, but of all the achievements in art during the reign of Louis XIV the Château de Versailles is incomparably the most magnificent. By that Château and its gardens you should judge the King.

Years before, Louis XIII had built a hunting lodge at Versailles, of red bricks and white stone. Louis XIV also went a-hunting in the forest there, liked the place, and decided to convert the lodge into something more worthy of his greatness, something that should royally outdo Fouquet's Château de Vaux. Louis Le Vau (1612—

1670), who had built the Château de Vaux, was appointed architect, André Le Nôtre (1613-1700) received the commission to lay out the gardens, Francini, an hydraulic engineer, that of the waterworks, and Charles Le Brun, the painter, was charged with the decorations of the new palace. The King, in spite of the architects, insisted that his father's hunting-lodge should be kept; and this filial piety is perhaps the most attractive trait in his character. But the trait is more than offset by the vulgar jealousy which caused his enmity to Fouquet, for hardly had Fouquet been lodged in the Bastille than these famous artists that I have mentioned, all the gangs of laborers who had been at work at Vaux-le-Vicomte, and all the orange trees there as well, were transferred to Versailles. It makes one think of David sending Uriah to the forefront of battle. For several years before building, the King had been giving great fêtes at Versailles. This was the period when he was in love with Mlle. de La Vallière, and he spent money as magnificently as the *grandes eaux* shoot up from the fountains. Poor Colbert, wringing his hands over his budget, wrote: "*Je déclare à Votre Majesté qu'un repas inutile de mille écus me fait une peine incroyable.*"

But it was not until 1668, at the period in which Madame de Montespan had supplanted Mlle. de La Vallière in the royal affections, that the great new château was actually begun. The King wished, so he said, "to be able to lodge his councillors more comfortably for a few days." His father's edifice was kept, and the new structure built about it. Though Le Vau died in 1670, his plans, so far as they went, were followed. In 1678 Hardouin-Mansart became the official architect. The *Galerie des Glaces* was completed in 1684, the south wing in 1686, the north wing in 1688. And, in the meanwhile, Le Brun and his bands of painters and decorators had been at work, adorning and

bedizening the *Galerie des Glaces*, halls, corridors, rooms, stairways, walls, and ceilings, and Le Nôtre, with his bands of gardeners and artisans, had been laying out the marvelous gardens, with their fountains, pools, parterres, groves, avenues, paths, vistas, the whole dotted with statues by the most famous sculptors of the time, Coysevox, Girardon, Puget, and a troop of less celebrated men.

Charles Le Brun was a mediocre painter; but his fame does not depend on his paintings. He was a man of conspicuous executive ability, and a great master of decoration. He drew plans, designs, and sketches for everything, he ordered such and such paintings for the ceilings, such and such stucco ornaments to be put here and there, a statue for this place, a mirror for that, tapestries to be hung yonder, furniture of specified kinds to be placed in this room and in that, decorated ornaments of metal arranged in such and such a manner, and so on. Trained in Rome, devoted to classical dogmas, full of energy and self-confidence, he understood the King and entered with complete sympathy into the King's desires for a palace that should express glory in the most flamboyant way. Indeed, the two men had very much the same taste. The King himself, though little sensitive to the delicate and refined influences of art, had a keen sense of obvious splendor, and superintended everything, and is entitled to the credit, for good or ill, of creating this unrivaled palace.

The sculptors of the period deserve more specific notice. They worked for Versailles and its gardens, but their most celebrated statues, to save them from hurt by the weather, are now housed in the Louvre.

Pierre Puget (1622-1694), after being apprentice for a time to a joiner who carved figures for the prows of galleys, made a tour in Italy. On coming back, he turned his





VERSAILLES



hand to carving wood or stone, ready to do anything that would sell, and took a fancy to painting. In 1659, the famous year of the Treaty of the Pyrenees and the triumph of Mazarin, he was in Paris, and employed by the Mæcenat Fouquet. Later we find him at Toulon, in charge of the decoration of the royal galleries. He had much force of character, — "*Le marbre tremble devant moi*," — and entertained no mean opinion of himself — as appears, I think, from likenesses of him in paint and terra cotta. What the hasty traveler knows of his work is the "Milo of Croton," once in the gardens at Versailles but now in the Louvre, where in baroque fashion a lion with great contortions is biting the unfortunate Milo in the flank, and the "Perseus rescuing Andromeda," a very spirited group in which Andromeda is modeled, Heaven knows why, on a much smaller scale than Perseus. But such sculptures belong out of doors; they need a background of foliage, of branches rustling in the breeze, of flying clouds casting shifting shadows, of straight avenues and long stretches of greensward, and the distant outline of balustraded roofs and *pots-à-feu*.

Coysevox (1640-1720) seems to have been diligence incarnate, as well as the most accomplished sculptor of his time. He executed a generous share of the sculptural decorations at Versailles; he worked for the Galerie d'Apollon in the Louvre, for the Invalides, and for the Grand Condé at Chantilly. But his bronze and marble busts now lodged in the Louvre are the most interesting of his works: the Grand Condé, haughty, uncontrolled, impetuous; Colbert, with thought seated on his handsome face; Coysevox himself, with his clever, good-humored face of a *bon bourgeois*; Charles Le Brun, with a grand air as if he had just come from the familiar presence of the Great King; the charming Madame du Vaucel;

Michel Le Tellier; and more ambitious figures, such as the duchesse de Bourgogne, wife of Fénelon's pupil, as *Diane chasseresse*; the tomb of Mazarin; the winged horses at the end of the Tuileries garden; and so on. Girardon (1625-1715) designed the tomb of Richelieu in the Church of the Sorbonne, which has a great reputation, but the ordinary Philistine has his difficulties. The baroque sometimes requires special sympathies. Religion, a feminine figure, supports the recumbent Cardinal, who, quite unlike himself in life, displays an ostentatious concern over the proper attitude to assume in his expected meeting with Deity, while Learning lies prostrate in grief at his feet. The portrait of Boileau, on the other hand, is very lifelike; and the plump nymphs in the bas-relief at the Fountain of Diana at Versailles have a most charming decorative effect of line and movement. "The Rape of Proserpine," at Versailles, is a little too much in the conventional classical manner; Girardon was thinking of Laocoön's sons with their arms uplifted and fingers outstretched, and perhaps also of what Bernini might say of his work. The artist is too subservient to the authority of the antique and of the Italian baroque.

I have spoken of Versailles as the supreme achievement of the *siècle de Louis XIV*, in which architects, landscape gardeners, sculptors, painters, weavers, cabinet-makers, and the great King himself, collaborated. But Versailles had been preceded by Vaux-le-Vicomte (1656-1661), where Le Vau had built the château and Le Nôtre had laid out the gardens, and where the wits had crowded to pay court to Mæcenas Fouquet. And, besides Vaux-le-Vicomte, architecture of that period has many another noble memorial. There is the Collège des Quatre Nations (now the *Institut*) (1661-1680), designed by Le Vau; the Place Vendôme (1699), by Jules Hardouin-Mansart; the

Chapelle des Invalides, on which Mansart put what one is tempted to call the most beautiful of domes. And then there is much of the Louvre.

When Louis XIV began to reign, the great square around the court of the palace as we see it did not exist; there was the west side, built by François I and Louis XIII, and the beginnings of the north and south sides, and there was also a long front along the Seine, which connected with the Palace of the Tuileries. Louis XIV decided to complete the square. Le Vau drew plans for the eastern front, opposite Saint-Germain-l'Auxerrois. Colbert, who came into power after Fouquet's fall, did not like Le Vau's plans. There must be something very grand. There were many confabulations. The renowned Bernini was fetched from Rome with the Pope's permission; but his plan, too, was rejected. Then Claude Perrault (1613-1688), a physician by profession, taking some hints from Bernini's plans, and some suggestions from his brother Charles, of Mother Goose and other fairy-tale fame, designed the great peristyle of coupled columns, which stands magnificently indifferent, in its measured beauty and sober ornament, to the style and appearance of the rest of the palace.

In painting, after Poussin, came Claude Lorrain (1600-1682), whose pictures, at their best, are studies of glorious light shining on strange palaces and seas, or illuminating antique landscapes and old ruins. He is a child of Italy, whither he went, a sort of young vagabond, when he was but thirteen, and again as a young man of twenty-five, and took service with a landscape painter, in whose house he did the chores, learned to grind colors, cleaned his master's palette, and washed his brushes. His master taught him the elements of perspective and design. He was in other respects very ignorant, and also very poor.



He wandered away to Lorraine, and became assistant to the Duke's painter. In 1627 he was back in Italy. By this time he had found himself and had learned his craft. He used to walk out on the Campagna, day after day, noting the different lights at different hours of the day, the effects of vapor, of morning dews, and all the shifts and ways of atmosphere. He delighted in Tivoli, and in the Campo Vaccino, in those happy days when the Forum was still a cow pasture. He etched a good deal, but his gift lay in depicting light by means of varying values; he was a sun worshiper, and bathed his landscapes in an atmosphere that no one again caught until Corot. Success came in middle life and then great celebrity. He made outline drawings of his pictures and kept them in portfolios that he called *Libri di verità*, for they enabled him to detect forged copies of his works. These drawings have been engraved, and I think it must have been these engravings that Goethe gave to Eckermann to look over while waiting for supper on April 10, 1829. Eckermann was delighted. "There you see," said Goethe, "a perfect man who has thought and felt, and in whose mind lay a world, the like of which will not readily be found elsewhere. The pictures have the highest truth, but no trace of reality. Claude Lorrain knew the real world by heart down to the smallest detail, and he used it as a means to express the world of his noble soul. . . . Further than that no man can go." Claude lived long in Italy, and loved Italy, and helps one remember how much intellectual France drew upon Italy, for inspiration, for lessons, for dogmas, and how greedily. And yet France was not an imitator; rather she put her borrowings to use in accordance with her own individual taste. Much as she took, no one confounds a work of French art, even when the artist — Poussin or Claude — owed his training to Italy, with the work of an Italian artist.

After Philippe de Champagne, the Fleming, the most excellent portrait painter, chronologically, is Pierre Mignard (1610-1695), a native of Troyes. He was a friend of Molière, you remember, and of the lovely Madame Scarron. You will see on the wall of the Louvre, in the *salle* devoted to the French painting of the seventeenth century, his large portrait of himself, splendidly bewigged, and seated in his comfortable chair facing you, with statuettes and bric-a-brac all about, in rather too dangerous proximity to the large portrait of Charles Le Brun, also splendidly bewigged, also seated in an armchair, with bric-a-brac all about, painted by Largillière, a younger and a better painter than himself. A French critic says that Mignard is *un délicieux portraitiste féminin*. Perhaps he learned too much from the Italian *seicento* painters. His "Vierge à la grappe" in the Louvre betrays the influence of Luini, of Raphael's Madonnas, of the Caracci, and it has been suggested that his portrait of Mazarin's niece, Marie Mancini, calls up memories of "La Gioconda." The frescoes in the cupola of Val-de-Grâce are his.

As a lad he worked in the studio of Simon Vouet, where he made the acquaintance of his lifelong rival and enemy, Charles Le Brun; at twenty he went to Italy for twenty-two years, where he made a reputation that carried him back to Paris. Then began the rivalry and quarrel with Le Brun, which is as interesting as that between Bossuet and Fénelon. It began, perhaps, as a question of taste. Painters of the time formed themselves into two groups; one group set primary store by line and by idealism, abstracting beauty and nobility from the alloy of less lovely reality, and held up Poussin as their pole star, while the others were all for color and Nature as she was, and shouted for Rubens. To the former group Le Sueur and Claude belonged, *Poussinistes*, and also Charles Le Brun,

who had traveled to Rome with Poussin, and studied the Carracci there; while Pierre Mignard was a *Rubéniste*, as were also Jean Jouvenet (1644-1717), Antoine Coypel (1661-1722), and the famous portrait painters Nicolas Largillière (1656-1746) and Hyacinthe Rigaud (1659-1743). So, to begin with, Mignard and Le Brun were in opposite camps.

When Mignard came back from Rome in 1652 he found Le Brun, who had an aptitude for success, full of work and very much the fashion. Le Brun had been painting religious pictures, without any trace of religious emotion in them, and had taken to decorating *hôtels* and painting mythological pictures, chief among these the Hôtel Lambert on the Île Saint-Louis (where Voltaire was to live one day in company with the marquise du Châtelet) and the Château de Vaux for Mæcenas Fouquet, where just before Fouquet's fall he painted the "Apothéose de Hercule" and "Triomphe de la fidélité," and taught Madame Fouquet drawing. After Fouquet's disgrace, Le Brun lost no time in joining Fouquet's enemies, and painted the King as "Alexander the Great." Le Brun was also head of the Academy of Painting; Mignard would not join. The breach between the two men seems to have come about the time when Mignard was painting in the Val-de-Grâce. Mignard and his friends, besides painting, also used to teach painting. Le Brun obtained a royal decree that only members of the Academy should have the right to teach (1664), and proceeded on in triumph. Colbert, the great minister, favored him in every way; he was put at the head of all the royal decorations, at the Louvre, at the Château Saint-Germain, at Marly (destroyed in the Revolution), at Versailles, and at Colbert's palace at Sceaux (destroyed), and also of the factory of Gobelins tapestry. He directed painters and sculptors, though

Puget was independent always, and Coysevox sometimes. It was Le Brun who decided that Perrault should do the colonnade of the Louvre. If Louis XIV was *le Roi Soleil*, surely Le Brun was the *Décorateur Soleil*. But Colbert, his great protector, died in 1683, and Louvois succeeded to Colbert's place and power. Louvois was a friend of Mignard, and from that time Le Brun Soleil hastened to his setting. He died on February 12, 1690, and Pierre Mignard became *premier peintre du Roi* and Chancellor of the Academy of Painting and Sculpture. But he was an old man and did not long live to enjoy his triumph. He died in 1695. Fénelon had fared less well, he was still in exile at Cambrai.

## XXII

### THE END OF THE REIGN

THE year of the revocation of the Edict of Nantes may be regarded as the apex of the King's glory. The revocation itself did not lack recoil; it alarmed the Protestant nations lest the King might harbor far-reaching designs against the reformed religion in all Europe. They were alarmed enough anyhow, for France had her eyes on the Rhine for her eastern boundary; England, Holland, and Sweden made common cause. A year or two later the Emperor joined them, in order to safeguard his Rhenish provinces from French aggression. In 1688 William of Orange, a mortal enemy of Louis XIV, mounted the English throne, and assumed the leadership of the coalition. Spain, too, wearied of being bullied, came in. Louis had been overweening; he had sowed, and now he must reap. It is unnecessary to recount the melancholy story of this useless war, known as the War of the League of Augsburg. Turenne and Condé were dead, but Marshals Luxembourg and Catinat on land, and the sailors Tourville, Château-renault, and Jean Bart at sea, upheld for a time the renown of French arms. Nevertheless, fortune veered about. After nine years of fighting, peace was made. France retained Strasbourg and a few small places, but was forced to relinquish her other conquests. England established her supremacy at sea. However, it is hardly worth while to mention this Treaty of Ryswick (1697), for within three years the War of the Spanish Succession broke out.

The king of Spain, Charles II, of feeble body and feebler mind, died childless, leaving a great empire without an



owner — the dukedom of Milan, the kingdom of the Two Sicilies, Sardinia, the Balearic Islands, the Catholic Netherlands, the Philippines, most of South America, a strip of Morocco, and so forth, as well as Spain itself. Here was a pretty quarry for the vultures of Europe. Of the several claimants, two stood out conspicuous — France and Austria. Both claims were derived through women. Louis XIV was the son of the eldest daughter of Philip III of Spain, and had married the eldest daughter of Philip IV, so he, not unreasonably it seems, judged the French claim, assigned to his grandson the duc d'Anjou, better than the others. The Emperor, Leopold of Austria, claimed through his mother, who was a younger daughter of Philip III, and he, too, had married a daughter of Philip IV; his claim was assigned to his son, the Archduke Charles. It was objected to the French claim that both Louis's mother and his wife had renounced all their right and title to the Spanish crown, but Louis replied that the renunciation had been made dependent on the payment of a marriage portion, which had never been paid, and was therefore null and void. Neither prince felt overconfident, and England objected to so great an accession of strength in either of them. They, therefore, prior to the death of Charles II, made an agreement to partition his empire. When this news reached Spain, its national pride was touched. The nobles were of one mind that the Spanish Empire should hold together, and believed that the only sovereign that could do this was Louis XIV. The dying King had the same feeling, and made a testament bequeathing his empire to his young grandnephew, the duc d'Anjou, with the proviso that the crowns of Spain and France should not be united. He died November 30, 1700. Louis XIV therefore had his choice of keeping his agreement for a partition of the Spanish Empire, or of

accepting the bequest and facing war. He chose the latter course; England, Holland, and the Empire declared war.

The War of the Spanish Succession lasted for twelve years (1702-1714). The Marshals Villars and Vendôme were men of military capacity, but no match for Marlborough and Prince Eugène; the victories of Blenheim (1704), Ramillies (1706), Oudenarde (1708), Malplaquet (1709), and the capture of Gibraltar (1704) by the English, remain memorable. France seemed beaten to her knees, and Louis XIV was ready to make any terms except to descend to the ignominy of uniting with the allies to drive his grandson, Philip V, from the throne. This he refused to do. The next year military matters went more favorably, and England made a secret peace, for the Tories had supplanted the Whigs. In 1713 the Peace of Utrecht was made with England, Holland, Savoy, Portugal, and Prussia, and next year with Austria. Philip V remained king of Spain, but the Spanish Netherlands and the duchy of Milan went to Austria; England held Gibraltar and sundry places in North America; France retained Strasbourg, Franche-Comté, and a strip of Flanders. The Elector of Brandenburg became king of Prussia, and the Duke of Savoy, in due course, king of Sardinia.

During these years from 1685 Louis XIV had become an old man, more and more the dominant institution in the State. The great ministers had died, Colbert in 1683, Louvois in 1691, and no men of equal worth had come to take their places. The King's most trusted counselors were now his confessors — the Jesuit Père La Chaise, best remembered because the great Cemetery in Paris occupies the site of his gardens, and after him another Jesuit, Père Le Tellier. The King was becoming more and more pious. Perhaps his most influential confidant was Madame de Maintenon, his wife. In earlier days, according

to Lavissee, the King was a *glouton d'amour*. Mlle. de La Vallière, a blue-eyed, pink-skinned, slender girl, *une violette qui se cachait sous l'herbe, honteuse d'être maîtresse*, was succeeded after six years by Madame de Montespan, a very lively lady, gay and quick of wit, who reigned over the King's affections for nine years, not counting *passades* (temporary flirtations); by her he had several children, to the scandal of the serious-minded, for there was a double violation of the Seventh Commandment. After these nine years the King said to her, "*Je n'aime pas à être gêné*," and Mlle. de Fontanges, *une belle idiote*, took her place. Then Madame Scarron came along, and became governess of Madame de Montespan's children. She was calm, tactful, and beautiful. When Mlle. de Fontanges was sent off to die in a nunnery — etiquette demanded that a king should have no successor — Madame Scarron, now Madame de Maintenon, nicknamed Madame de Maintenant, became the keeper of the King's conscience. She was a good woman, and tried to bring the King to a fulfillment of his duties towards the poor Queen, a dumpy, stupid little Spanish princess, who never acquired a good French accent. But the Queen died in July 1683, and the next year the King married Madame de Maintenon.

This lady was very pious. The King, too, partly perhaps under her influence, became, as I have said, more pious daily. Religious matters pressed thick upon him. The Gallican liberties put him at loggerheads with the Pope, and in European politics he often had need of the Pope, so that he alternated between bullying and deference. Jansenism troubled him, not perhaps so much by its doctrine of grace as by its austere standards that absolutely condemned his adultery with Madame de Montespan. Cross currents of ecclesiastical policy and creed vexed him; Bossuet, a stout Gallican, leaned towards the

morals of the Jansenists; Fénelon, detesting the Jansenists, leaned towards the ultramontanes. All this worried the old King, who was concerned about his soul; and also worried the gentle, kindly Madame de Maintenon, especially in the dark days when Marlborough and Prince Eugène were almost threatening Paris.

Moreover, underneath and behind these religious disagreements and difficulties, the rights of reason, which had asserted their control in art and literature already, were sowing seeds that bore so plentiful a harvest two generations later. The philosophy of Descartes, with its logic, its maxim, *Il faut se défaire de toutes sortes de préjugés et douter de tout avant que de s'assurer d'aucune connaissance*, was spreading throughout the more intelligent in the educated classes. Père Malebranche (1638-1715), in spite of his real piety, furthered the cause of skepticism by following up some of Descartes's ideas. He wrestled with the problem how mind can make itself acquainted with matter, across the seemingly impassable gulf between them, and with that greater difficulty, the human will, and other metaphysical questions. Fontenelles (1657-1757), also following Descartes, dilated on the right of reason to investigate whatever it could, and published popular treatises on astronomy and such other matters as the lately founded Académie des Sciences concerned itself with. Pierre Bayle (1647-1706), though the least distinguished mind of the three, caused his name to resound with most noise through the world. A Protestant, he took refuge in Rotterdam, and became a professor, and then a writer. His fame rests upon his reiteration of the primary duty of doubt; he supported his theory by the teachings of history and the contradictions between orthodox thinkers. Doubt should lead, he thought, to tolerance. His *Dictionnaire historique et critique* (1697) may

be regarded, perhaps, as the starting point of the rationalists of the eighteenth century ; at any rate, his arguments led directly to atheism. These men represent rational thought. Read them ; but also go to the Church of Saint-Sulpice, which stands like the theology of the Sorbonne, stately, imposing, stolidly formal, until the late afternoon sun shines upon the façade and ennobles portico, columns, recesses, towers, with the radiance of divine inspiration, and you will then understand better than I can tell you what their opponents — the great preachers, seated in monumental stone, in the square before the church, Bossuet, Fénelon, Massillon, Fléchier — had to say in reply.

The latter years of the great King were not passed on a bed of roses. There were many vacant chairs by his fireside. The fat, loutish Dauphin, whom Bossuet had been privileged to teach, died in 1711 ; the Dauphin's son, the duc de Bourgogne, taught by Fénelon, died in 1712. The duc de Bourgogne had married the gay Savoyarde princess, whose statue as Diana by Coysevox is in the Louvre, and left a baby son destined to be Louis XV. The Dauphin's second son became Philip V of Spain ; his third son lost three little children, and died himself in 1714. The old King accepted these sorrows and the defeats of his armies with pious firmness, but Madame de Maintenon says : "*Il lui prend quelquefois des pleurs dont il n'est pas le maître.*" Neither did the people always bear with equanimity the privations forced upon them by taxation for the moneys swallowed up in wars and the Palace of Versailles. Some of their songs were bitter :

*Le grandpère est un fanfaron,  
Le fils un imbécile,  
Le petit fils un grand poltron,  
Ohé ! la belle famille !*



In the black year 1709 there were riots, and the women of Paris assembled to march on Versailles, fourscore years before their more famous expeditions, to demand a reduction of taxes on bread. So the reign of *le Roi Soleil* went to its setting in sorrow and failure. He died on September 1, 1715, leaving his little great-grandson, Louis XV, in charge of a council presided over by a regent, the clever, cultivated duc d'Orléans, the King's nephew, a man charged not only with atheism, but with the most revolting vices.

The long reign of this proud, intolerant, bullying, self-indulgent king had set the kingdom well on the way to the Revolution of 1789. Wars, the gross extravagance of Versailles and other pleasure palaces, of his mistresses and bastards, the revocation of the Edict of Nantes and the consequent exile of a half-million industrious subjects, his fiscal system, his preservation of outworn privileges and social arrogances, the consolidation of his own absolute power, all combined to undermine the State. The story of court life, as we get it in Saint-Simon or in Dangeau, which seen from afar looks glorious, is in truth vulgar, gross, and ridiculous. The regent, the duc d'Orléans, and the young heir, Louis XV, were part of the harvest of the old King's sowing; so were Madame de Pompadour and Madame du Barry.

## XXIII

### THE REGENCY AND LOUIS XV

THE Regent had his troubles at once. The King was a frail little fellow five years old. The next in succession was Philip V of Spain, who had renounced the French crown but had no intention of observing his renunciation. There were also the two sons of Madame de Montespan, whom Louis XIV had declared legitimate and capable of inheriting the throne, by an edict which the subservient Parlement had registered. The duc d'Orléans preferred to be the heir himself. He quashed the act of legitimacy of the Montespan bastards, and made an alliance with England and Holland to maintain the Spanish renunciation of the French crown. A little later France was at war with Spain, which, however, ended in an alliance, in Philip's reiterated renunciation, and the betrothal of Philip's daughter to Louis XV. Philip's daughter was three years old. He wrote to her: "*Je ne veux pas que vous appreniez par un autre que par moi-même, ma très chère petite fille, que vous êtes reine de France.*" Poor little Louis XV, now aged eleven, wept at the news.

The chief personage in French foreign affairs was the Abbé Dubois, a little man, ready, resourceful, with a glib tongue and insinuating manners, energetic, and very capable. His origin was humble, and the aristocracy affected to look down upon him, but, as his abilities far exceeded those of any nobles about the Court, he rose rapidly. It was he that effected the alliance with England and Holland that I have just referred to. Shortly before the war with Spain he became minister of foreign affairs,

and after much intriguing obtained a cardinal's hat, and the next year rose to be first minister, and to crown his honors, in would-be imitation of Richelieu's career, he was admitted into the Académie Française.

During this time a very notable domestic affair had taken place. A Scottish adventurer, John Law, came to Paris full of a plan for creating a national bank. Law was rich, persuasive, tingling with energy, and able to point to the signal financial advantage that banks such as that at Amsterdam, for instance, had conferred. If a private bank was so useful, a national bank would be much more so. The Regent held off at first. He had many causes of financial vexation; if he continued to button up one, he found a dozen more unbuttoned. He had even considered the plan of national bankruptcy. At last he gave ear to Law and chartered La Banque Royale. But Law was not content with that; his ambition was to manage all the business of the kingdom. As I most unsuccessfully attempt to apprehend, Law's plan was based on the value of credit. Credit would increase capital indefinitely; with the credit of the kingdom behind the bank, it could do an immense business and bring prosperity in at door and windows. To supply credit all you need do was to issue notes. But he must get control of French commerce, and to that end he took over the Compagnie des Indes Occidentales, a company formed to exploit the vast and unknown region, Louisiana, and took also the shadowy companies, Des Indes Orientales and De Chine, and so he acquired the virtual monopoly of French foreign trade. His company also took over the mint; it farmed the revenue. Everybody was crazy to get shares in this magical, all-embracing, fortune-giving scheme. Over a million families acquired an interest in it. All the time Law was issuing notes. For a period trade, hurriedly

stimulated, flourished. But a change soon came. The company's receipts could not pay interest on the shares; their value fell, and with them the value of the notes. The whole "system," as it is called, tumbled "with hideous ruin down to bottomless perdition." Prices of all articles, necessities or luxuries, rose by leaps and bounds. Before long the "system" disappeared, leaving a trail of confusion and distress. Law, really an honest man, lost all his fortune and fled (1720). Many people had been ruined, public credit badly damaged, public confidence shaken, and another push given to the monarchy on the downward path.

Cardinal Dubois died in 1723; and the duc d'Orléans a few months later followed him to the tomb, leaving his orgies in the Palais-Royal perhaps with indifference. The duc de Bourbon, a grandson of the Great Condé, became first minister. He is remembered because he broke off the King's betrothal to the Infanta, who was but six years old, in order that, as the King's health was uncertain, there might be an immediate royal marriage and an heir to the throne, so removing the danger of any possible claim by Philip V. With this purpose, Louis XV, aged fifteen, married Marie Leczinska, daughter of Stanislas, the deposed king of Poland, an amiable, healthy young woman of twenty-three. Philip V resented the affront, and made friends with Austria; to meet the danger of this alliance, France concerted with England, Prussia, and Holland to maintain the balance of power in Europe. But in spite of the successful negotiation of the royal marriage, the duc de Bourbon's day was over. His clever, insinuating subordinate, l'Abbé Fleury, had won the King's favor, and, in spite of the Queen's attempt to uphold the Duke, the latter was dismissed from Court to his estate at Chantilly, and l'Abbé Fleury virtually became first minister in his stead (1726).

Fleury had been bishop of the remote bishopric of Fréjus, on the Mediterranean coast — so remote that he called himself *évêque de Fréjus, par l'indignation divine*. By the help of the Jesuits, he had been appointed the King's preceptor, and then by his own address, abilities, and good looks had made his upward way himself. In foreign affairs he wished for peace, for although foreign commerce now prospered and domestic trade had recovered more or less from Law's company, thanks in great measure to the improvement of the roads, nevertheless the fiscal system, with its unjust, unwise taxes, its mediæval intermeddling with artisans and laborers, and its extravagantly protective principles, caused much poverty and misery. But peace was denied him.

Europe was in an unsettled state. England was ambitious of maritime domination; Spain coveted its old possessions in Italy; Russia and Prussia were new and uncertain factors. First came the War of the Polish Succession. In 1733 the king of Poland died. A party in France favored the candidacy of Stanislas Leczinski, father to the Queen. Austria supported another candidate. I will limit myself to the upshot, which explains how Lorraine, a subject of dispute between France and the German Empire one may say ever since the days of Charlemagne, finally became a French province. The issues are complicated because, at this time, the Emperor of Austria, having no son, wished to leave his hereditary dominions to his daughter, Maria Theresa, and asked France as well as the other European Powers to guarantee her succession; and that matter added its difficulties to the treaty of peace. As to Poland the Austrian candidate prevailed, but Austria ceded to Leczinski, in compensation, the duchy of Lorraine, with reversion on his death to France, while the Duke of Lorraine, who was to marry Maria



Theresa, became Grand Duke of Tuscany, instead. The right of Maria Theresa to her father's hereditary dominions was guaranteed, and France on Leczinski's death received Lorraine. In such fashion, to suit family appetites, these dynasties divided up the territories of Europe.

But this diplomacy did not bring peace. Hard on the heels of the treaty came the War of the Austrian Succession. The Emperor died, and Maria Theresa attempted to succeed to the hereditary dominions of Austria. The guaranties given proved as binding as dicers' oaths. As in the earlier case of Spain, here was a carcass and the vultures swooped down. The new king of Poland, the Elector of Bavaria, the Duke of Savoy, the king of Spain, Frederick II of Prussia, just come to the crown, all made claims. In France the anti-Austrian party, inheritors of Richelieu's policy, swept the pacific and temporizing Cardinal Fleury off his feet. All rushed to arms. England, with an eye to colonial advantages, declared for Maria Theresa. The war ended in 1748 by the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle. Maria Theresa was acknowledged; her husband became Emperor; Frederick the Great got Silesia; everybody got something, except France. Louis XV congratulated himself in that *il avait traité en roi, non pas en marchand*. Not only had France got nothing, but in consequence of her military efforts on land she had neglected her marine, and so when she came to a maritime grapple with England, in which Canada and India were to be the prizes, she was helpless. And yet French arms had upheld French renown; Maréchal Saxe won the victory of Fontenoy over the English and Dutch (1745), memorable for the legendary remark of some French officer at the opening of musket fire, "*Après vous, Messieurs les Anglais!*" Maréchal Saxe, for his

part, is best remembered by Legouv  's play, *Adrienne Lecouvreur*, for this beautiful and charming actress was deep in love with the big, brilliant, blue-eyed soldier.

Another episode in the war, the career of Dupleix in India, needs to be recorded. The English East India Company possessed trading posts along the coast, at Bombay, Madras, Calcutta, while the French East India Company held several on the southwest coast, Pondich  ry on the east coast, and another near the mouth of the Ganges. Dupleix, the Governor-General (1742), attempted, with the help of La Bourdonnais, a capable, headstrong officer, to expel the English. La Bourdonnais captured Madras. But he entered into negotiations with the English to ransom the town, fell under suspicion in consequence, and was called home. Dupleix, with very inadequate means, defended Pondich  ry against an English expedition. He enjoyed now a great reputation among the natives, and had the French government supported him with vigor it is not improbable that the French might have become so strong in India as to render Clive's career impossible; but the government neglected ship-building and maritime interests, and devoted itself to profitless wars on the Continent. By the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle France restored to England the places she had taken.

These political events make a sombre background for the Epicurean King. He was a handsome man, of the boudoir type, as you may see in Quentin La Tour's pastel. He was very pious, regular in his devotions, without permitting his religion to meddle in any way with his conduct. He used to read sermons to his mistresses. He had odd bursts of petulance, found difficulty in speaking, was fond of the chase, intelligent, shrewd, but lazy, fundamentally indifferent. He was often terribly bored. On the

death of Cardinal Fleury, Madame de Pompadour became the directress of national policy.

The King wasted little affection on his amiable, stupid wife, who however bore him ten children in ten years. His more ardent feelings were first bestowed, according to the official manner of the time, upon four sisters in turn. The last of these, Madame de Châteauroux, might have directed the King's conscience and conduct, but she died, and a quick-witted, worldly lady, Madame de Tencin (incidentally, the mother of the famous d'Alembert), who formerly had counseled Madame de Châteauroux, and whose salon was a centre of fashionable and intellectual society, according to report, if I may use a vulgar expression, groomed Madame de Pompadour, as she was to become, for the place. This clever lady easily made up her mind to attain the position that she secured. The King's heart, to be sure, hung as it were on a lower bough, ripe for the picking. You may see how she looked in the portraits by Boucher, who never had a subject more appropriate to his gay, airy, delicate, voluptuous brush, or in the portrait by Vanloo, or in the pastel by Quentin La Tour. She was just of a beauty to please such a man as the King. Her eyes were gray, her skin of delicate loveliness, a perfect nose, a charming mouth, handsome teeth, a fascinating smile, and light auburn hair. She was tall, slim, elegant of carriage, and could act well and play on the clavecin. And yet, as with Boucher, as with the King, the subtle fairy, Vulgarity, had attended at her christening. There was considerable scandal when she attained her ambition of becoming the King's acknowledged mistress (1745); the *noblesse* was shocked because she was not noble, the clergy because she corresponded with Voltaire. With her the world of unscrupulous finance came into power. She was fond of luxury in its

most prodigal aspects, in part as a means of holding the King, and she weighed heavily in the balance of the public budget. The people came to hate her: "*Qu'on renvoie cette p—— qui gouverne le royaume*"; but the Queen said, if the King must have a mistress, "*J'aime mieux celle-là qu'une autre.*" According to what the Goncourts relate of her, one rather likes her. She fought against many pretendants to her place with tact and spirit, and when dispossessed she was what is called a good loser, and remained the King's friend and comrade. Yet satisfied ambition did not bring her happiness; she said truly: "*La vie que je mène est terrible . . . plaignez-moi et ne m'accusez pas.*" An acquaintance with la Pompadour and later with la Du Barry is necessary to an understanding of the Revolution.

But let us turn to the pleasant, the charming, aspect of their reign, with its soft, debonair, lightly come and lightly go graces and charms, and also let us not forget that Louis XV was called in his lifetime *le Bien-aimé*. At Reims, in the Palace Royale, you will see his statue with this inscription:

*De l'amour des Français éternel monument,  
Instruisez à jamais la terre,  
Que Louis dans nos murs jura d'être leur père,  
Et fut fidèle à son serment.  
À Louis XV  
Le meilleur des rois  
Qui par la douceur de son gouvernement  
Fait le bonheur des peuples*

1765

Among the artists, Boucher (1703-1770), who painted, it is said, ten thousand pictures, with his mastery of composition, his lines that rhyme in soft harmonies, is the most

typical painter of the age, of the style Louis XV, light, gay, gallant, licentious often, joyous always. But there are two painters far greater than he — Watteau and Chardin. Antoine Watteau (1684-1721), sad of aspect, melancholy in life, dying at thirty-seven like Raphael, *le peintre des fêtes galantes*, is the master of fairyland on canvas. In some blithe dreams of golden mists he steeped his colors. His poetical half-tones, his hazy distances, have never been recaptured. "L'Embarquement pour Cythère" (1717) is a sun-illuminated fairy fête,

Such sights as youthful poets dream  
On summer eves by haunted stream.

How admirable, true, and poignant is his "Gilles," how delicate the white surfaces, how gracious the hues, the touches of rose, the touches of blue — a palette prepared in wonderland. How enchanting "L'Indifférent," "La Finette," and many another! How charming the model with a beautiful back who appears as a fashionable lady in "L'Enseigne de Gersaint," as Aphrodite in the "Jugement de Paris," and in many other pictures of lovely ladies, and to be seen again, herself or in imitation, in Watteau's followers, Lancret (1690-1743) and Pater (1695-1736)!

Chardin (1699-1779), in his sober way, is as good as Watteau. You like one or the other best, according as you are sensitive to the sensuous beauty of color, and to vague feelings of love and pathos blended, or prefer the simplicity of truth, touched with Wordsworthian poetry, as in "Le Bénédicité," or ingenuously exquisite as in "L'Enfant au toton," or in the pictures of still life which Chardin envelops in an atmosphere such as memory wraps around happy recollections of childhood.

Among portrait painters there is Nattier (1685-1766), a



little commonplace; his court beauties show high-colored cheeks and lips, bright eyes, oval countenances, as if they were all patterns to conform to a not oversensitive royal taste in ladies-in-waiting. He painted Madame de Châteauroux; perhaps she set the type. There is Jean-Baptiste Vanloo (1684-1745), a painter of moderate interest. Far superior to both is Quentin La Tour (1704-1788). He painted in pastels, an art brought from Italy by a Venetian lady, Rosalba Carriera. La Tour painted the King, the Queen, the Dauphin, Madame de Pompadour, d'Alembert, Maréchal de Saxe, Madame Favart, the charming actress, and, best of all, his own lively, sensitive, attractive face. Perronneau (1715-1783), who by most critics nowadays — for critics are obliged to differ from their predecessors — is rated higher, also painted excellent portraits in pastel.

For sculpture, you will see the spirited horses, "Les Chevaux de Marly" (1740), at the entrance of the Champs-Élysées, by Guillaume Coustou, the "Fontaine des Quatre Saisons" in the rue de Grenelle (1739), and, for instance, "Cupid Bending His Bow," in the Louvre, by Bouchardon. Sculpture has come back to simplicity, to nature. Pigalle (1714-1785) modeled the statue to Louis XV at Reims to which I have referred, and "Mercury Tying His Sandal" in the Louvre, and Falconet (1716-1791) that charming little nymph, "La Baigneuse," so lithe, delicate, and maidenly.

But the essence of the *style Louis XV*, *le style rocaille*, is to be found in the decoration of rooms and in furniture. In great periods such matters of petty luxury are but little considered; in this reign they push themselves to the front. The gay society of high finance, of the Court, of the aristocracy, took delight in building country houses or *hôtels particuliers* in town, and in the embellishment of

boudoirs, salons, places to talk or flirt in. The most complete specimen of this art — charming and delightful in one's careless moods — is the Hôtel Soubise, now the Palais des Archives Nationales, and in particular the *Salon Ovale*, built by the architect Bouffrand in 1735. Here decoration opens all its petals and hangs in ripe clusters — mirrors, panels, paintings, all framed by rich, sensuous, fantastic borders, with dimpled Cupids perched here and there, and, above, a blue ceiling with its pretty *rosace centrale*. If less sumptuous, many other *hôtels* were very much rouged and powdered, too; there were all sorts of fantastic, and yet charming, paintings on their walls, *turqueries*, *chinoiseries*, *singeries*, and so on. You learn here why France was beaten in the Seven Years' War, why Frederick the Great won Rossbach, and England ravished from her India, Canada, and the high seas.

Furniture vied with interior decoration. Fashion, as always, kept changing, passing from Boulle in the time of Louis XIV, via Charles Cressent, to Riesener in that of Louis XVI. The cabinetmakers sought richness, novelty, and comfort. The legs, arms, backs, and cushions of the chairs, their upholstery, their ornament, are still the delight of amateurs, who discuss, as jockeys discuss the points of a horse, the *bergère*, the *fauteuil-bergère*, the *bergère à confessionnal*, the *marquise*, the *fauteuil de toilette*, the *lit à la duchesse*, the *lit à la polonaise*, *commodes*, *chiffonnières*, tables, *tables-bureaux*, *tapisseries*, chandeliers, mirrors, *orfèvrerie*, faïence, and all the multitude of decorative ornaments, cupids, flowers, festoons, shells, gryphons, dragons, ribbons, women's heads, grotesque faces, and whatever other wriggling and twisting shapes the asymmetrical can assume, together with lacquer, varnish, and inlays of far-fetched, precious woods.

One cannot deny originality to architects, decorators, cabinetmakers, but the originality is not in structure, not in the substance, but in the accidents of the works of art. Architecture, for instance, drops the pillared portico of the last generation, and makes odd oval windows under the roof, or fashions window frames awry and hangs festoons on every point of vantage.

But one must remember that these trappings were but salon decorations, and in the salon witty women and well-read men met and talked, and fleeted afternoon and evening hours away in most delightful fashion. One such hostess was Madame de Tencin, who, having left her baby, d'Alembert, on the steps of a church for some Good Samaritan to take care of, entertained her guests with all the arts of conversation. Another such was Madame du Deffand, who after an animated youth, which according to Horace Walpole included a very brief adventure with the Regent, had settled down to a Joan and Darby life with a clever, cultivated, amiable gentleman, Hénault, a magistrate of high position. Madame du Deffand's letters, clear, concise, elegant, full of happy turns of phrase, enable us to imagine the conversation in her salon. Next to Voltaire's letters, they make the most agreeable reading of the eighteenth century. Literature gives other aspects of this careless, pleasure-loving generation. On the stage there is Marivaux (1688-1763), a familiar guest in Madame de Tencin's salon, as afterwards with Madame du Deffand and Madame Geoffrin. *La Suspense de l'amour* (1723), the *Double Inconstance*, and *Les Fausses Confidences* (1737), may still be read with pleasure on shipboard, of a long calm afternoon. His subject is love, always, I think, refined, and depicted with *l'exquise finesse des manières et du ton*. But a more vivid version of the age is to be found in l'Abbé Prévost's famous romance, *Histoire du*

*chevalier Des Grieux et de Manon Lescaut* (1733). It is Boucher in the form of a novel — simple, pathetic, voluptuous, tragic; many tender-hearted people of irreproachable morals have wept over it. On the other hand, Dr. Johnson would have spoken bluntly of both hero and heroine as scoundrel and harlot. Anatole France says: “*Tout est naturel, tout est vrai, tout est juste, dans ce petit livre. On n’y pourrait pas changer un mot.*” The life of the Abbé was as picturesque as that of *Gil Blas* — twice a Jesuit, twice in the army, once a Benedictine monk, once a priest, for a time a refugee in Holland, and also in England. The Prince de Conti offered him a place as *Aumônier*; the Abbé had scruples: “*Je ne dis jamais la messe*”; to which the Prince replied, “*Je ne l’entends jamais.*” He translated *Clarissa Harlowe* and *Sir Charles Grandison*, and died busy with works of piety, for, as Anatole France says, *il n’avait jamais préféré que les femmes à Dieu.*

I must not pass without naming the great classic *Gil Blas* (1715), or the *Mémoires* of Saint-Simon, who recounts with prejudice and passion what he saw and heard at Court from 1699–1720. As a teller of such stories, Saint-Simon is an artist of the first rank. He belongs here by order of chronology, for his *Mémoires* were not published till 1830.

## XXIV

### REVOLUTIONARY FACTORS

IN the seventeenth century France was on the whole strongly Christian and monarchical. Nevertheless, in the latter decades faith had been not a little disturbed by the disputes between Gallicans and ultramontanes, between Jansenists and Jesuits, as well as by the cruelties accompanying the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, and the excessive bigotry of the King's latter years; and the monarchy, if not shaken, had been hit and bruised, by lost battles, and by grinding taxation. In the reign of Louis XV the monarchy received more blows and more bruises, and Christianity also. As the century advanced, discontents grew, accumulated, rolled into one another, until at the end the conglomerate mass slid and crashed a great avalanche of ruin, sweeping away both monarchy and Christianity.

The monarchy suffered from the vices of the Court. On the outside we have Boucher, Lancret, Pater, gay boudoirs, dainty furniture, all the extravagances of heedless luxury; underneath there is intrigue, vice, and corruption. Let me cite an instance to show the workings of the system. It was when Cardinal Fleury was prime minister. There was a certain Popelinière, one of the most successful money-getters in the world of high finance. He had a mistress, an actress, who wished him to marry her. She complained to Madame de Tencin; Madame de Tencin buttonholed Cardinal Fleury, and the Cardinal refused to renew a government contract with Popelinière unless he married his mistress. Thus pressed, Popelinière



married, only to find that a panel in the chimney of his wife's apartment connected with the apartment of the duc de Richelieu, a famous old roué. One suspects, perhaps without right, that the duc de Richelieu set this machinery in motion. Again: the King had been stabbed by a half-crazy fellow, and expected to die. The assassin's right hand was burned off, his body was torn with pincers, and melted lead poured into the wounds; he lived on for five hours, and was then torn asunder by horses (1757). The King, expecting to die, begged the Queen's pardon for the wrongs he had done her, and sent Machault, an excellent minister, to Madame de Pompadour to tell her that it was the royal pleasure that she should leave Versailles. Madame de Pompadour decided to abide the chance; she refused to go, and when the King recovered there was no further thought of sending her away. It was Machault who went. The King, who liked him very much and had called him a man *selon mon cœur*, was obliged to write, "*Les circonstances présentes m'obligent de vous redemander mes sceaux*," etc. The minister next in rank thought Machault's fall meant his rise, and, imagining himself so powerful that he would be able to supplant la Pompadour by a protégée of his own, wrote to this lady, "*Le garde de sceaux est renvoyé; vous allez revenir, ma chère amie, et nous serons maîtres du tripot*." This was the year that Frederick the Great annihilated the French army at Rossbach.

Hand in hand with intrigue and corruption at home went defeat and disgrace abroad. The Seven Years' War dealt a fierce blow to the monarchy. The effect of that war was to transfer the French colonial empire, in Canada and India, from France to England. The beginnings of the war arose in America. The French establishments had gone up the St. Lawrence, along the Great Lakes,

and down the Mississippi, into that great region called, in honor of Louis XIV, Louisiana. Braddock met with his memorable defeat (1755). Neither Louis XV nor Madame de Pompadour wished for war, but events were too strong for them. France joined Austria, Russia, Poland, and Sweden, against Great Britain and Prussia. Then the military genius of Frederick the Great showed itself; he routed the French at Rossbach (November 1757), the Austrians at Leuthen (December 1757), and the French again at Crefeld (June 1758). On the seas the English destroyed the French fleets, in America they captured Louisburg (1757), Quebec (1759), Montreal (1760), and they also made themselves masters of India. By the treaty of peace in 1763 France was reduced, as compared to Great Britain, to the position of a second-rate Power. The monarchy began to be a little groggy.

Christianity was not faring much better. Internal dissensions grew with tropical luxuriance. Here is one quarrel. The ultramontane bishops ordered their clergy to refuse the sacraments to persons suspected of Jansenism, unless such persons presented a certificate that they had confessed to an ultramontane priest. Angered by this, the Parlement de Paris, a Gallican and Jansenist body, took judicial action against priests who required the certificate. One ultramontane priest refused the viaticum, and the Parlement sent a bailiff to compel him to administer it. Feeling ran high. The comte d'Argenson, then minister of foreign affairs, said: "*La perte de la religion ne doit pas être attribuée à la philosophie anglaise qui n'a gagné qu'une centaine de philosophes, mais à la haine envers les prêtres. . . . Les esprits se tournent au mécontentement et à la désobéissance, et tout chemine à une grande révolution dans la religion et dans le gouvernement.*"

This hatred was not merely of the people towards the

priests, but of priests towards priests, Jansenist against Jesuit. This time the Jansenists triumphed. The famous Society of Jesus had for generations exercised an immense influence over the royal families and the dominant classes in the Catholic kingdoms of the continent; it controlled education. Its success, its reputed arrogance, its supposed approval of regicide, had raised up many enemies. It was devoted to the supremacy of the Pope, and so fell foul of Gallicanism. At last its adversaries got their chance. Some members of the Society engaged in unsuccessful mercantile speculations. Creditors obtained a judgment against the Society, and the Parlement de Paris, exercising its elastic powers, sequestered all its property, examined its constitution and all books ever written by Jesuits, accused the Society of favoring regicide and of all sorts of misbehavior, condemned it *in toto*, suppressed its schools, and finally banished the fathers. In all this the King acquiesced, apparently with reluctance; Madame de Pompadour was in sympathy with the persecution. There you have *odium theologicum*. Now for instances of bigotry.

Unfortunate Protestants were caught meeting in forbidden conventicles; one pastor was hanged at Grenoble, 1745, another at Die, 1746, two others at Montpellier, 1746, 1752, a fifth at Toulouse, 1762. Of the congregations, the men were sent to the galleys, the women to perpetual imprisonment. Their marriages were declared null and void, their children bastards; the girls were put in Catholic convents. Irreverence was treated with equal severity. At Abbéville, in 1765, a crucifix was found damaged. To expiate the offense a great ecclesiastical procession was held; at which it was noticed that some young men, under twenty-one, failed to kneel and to take off their hats. One of them, though I think that he denied

these offenses, admitted at his trial that he had sung profane songs, that he had read sundry objectionable books, *La Religieuse en chemise*, *Le Dictionnaire philosophique* of Voltaire, and so on. He was condemned, a placard marked *Impie* was affixed to his back, his tongue was cut out, his head stricken off, and his body burned. Of this religious hate, the most famous instance is the case of Calas. In 1762 the Protestant Calas family were living upstairs in their house in Toulouse; you can see the house still. The eldest son, of a melancholy temperament, and discouraged because having studied law he could not, as a Protestant, be admitted to the Bar, left the company and went downstairs. The others, going down later, found this young man dead, hanged to the door. Rumor spread through the populace that the lad had wished to turn Catholic and that his father had murdered him. He was dubbed a martyr. The father was arrested, convicted, and broken on the wheel. Voltaire seized upon this case as a means to attack the whole system of bigotry and cruelty; he drew the attention of all Europe to it, and forced the Parlement de Paris to reverse the condemnation, three years after Calas's death.

Was it strange, with Jesuits, Jansenists, Gallicans, ultramontanes, quarreling among themselves, with this brutal cruelty over religious disagreements, that the *philosophes* felt it their duty to call upon the goddess Reason, and to attack as fiercely as they could organized Christianity and the government that upheld it? Of these men who appealed to reason and attacked prejudice, injustice, superstition, and undermined both monarchy and the Christian religion, it is time to speak. They prepared the way for the Revolution of 1789.

Of these intellectual laborers, Voltaire and Rousseau are easily first, but I will begin by mentioning others.

Montesquieu (1689-1755) was primarily a philosophic thinker on matters of government, but his criticism touched the whole social fabric. In 1721 he published the *Lettres persanes*, in which, under the pretense of criticizing Persian ways and customs, he satirizes those of France — the greed of financiers, the outrageous privileges of the *noblesse*, the despotism of the King, and so on. In 1748 appeared *L'Esprit des lois*, one of the famous books in French literature. He classifies the forms of government as three, a despotism, a monarchy, a republic, and discusses them both in the abstract and in relation to climate, religion, trade, and manners. He was a great admirer of the English constitution, and preached the separation of powers into judicial, legislative, and administrative. One of his famous pronouncements was upon the qualities proper to each of the three forms of government: fear to a despotism, honor to a monarchy, and to a republic virtue. In short, he held up the ideal of a liberal, tolerant government; he denounced slavery and torture, and left Providence quite out of consideration.

Diderot (1713-1784) was a vigorous, indefatigable person, essentially of the people, as the phrase is, brimming over with ideas and multitudinous words to clothe them, whether in his publications or in conversation, — at the tavern, at Baron d'Holbach's, at Madame d'Épinay's, or in letters to Falconet, the sculptor, or other friends, — a kindly, rather meddlesome, good fellow, very intelligent and very sensitive. One day his friends found him in deep dejection. What is the matter? Have you lost your money? Are your family all dead? No, he had been reading *Clarissa Harlowe*, and had left poor Clarissa in very critical danger. In 1745 Diderot was chosen by some publishers to edit an Encyclopædia, and this work grew in his hands to become an attempt at an exposition



of universal knowledge. He asked d'Alembert, Madame de Tencin's foundling, to help him. D'Alembert (1717-1783) possessed a clear, apprehensive mind with a special aptitude for science, very entertaining if he chose to be, with his quick little eyes, his *sourire très fin*, with his anecdotes and his ideas. He was violently antichristian. He frequented the salon of Mlle. de Lespinasse, and bestowed upon her an affection which that passionate spirit did not return. Many other writers of more or less note contributed to the Encyclopædia. The first volume was issued in 1751.

Diderot had been cautious, but not cautious enough. He did not, I believe, deny the existence of a God, but as he did not find God in nature he disregarded Him; and in his devotion to nature and natural ways, and with his habit of ascribing all vices to society, he upheld modes of life that most people of conventional ideas would regard as licentious. The first two volumes were condemned by an order of the royal council, on the ground that they impugned the King's authority and corrupted good manners. This rigor was afterwards mitigated, and the work continued under the protection of Madame de Pompadour, and after many vicissitudes was completed at the end of twenty years in a score or so of volumes. Diderot also wrote plays, novels, criticism of painting — of the Salons of 1765, 1766, and 1767. The range of his interests, and of his influence, was almost a rival to that of Voltaire.

Helvetius (1715-1771) believed that men differed merely by education, — a doctrine at odds with the doctrines of grace and of natural depravity, — and therefore he preached that education was of immeasurable importance. Condillac (1715-1780), following Locke, maintained that all ideas are derived from sensations, and in so doing he

also pushed aside any special interference of deity. D'Holbach (1723-1769), also, asserted the domination of physical laws, and bowed metaphysics out of the door; the title of his book, *Le Christianisme dévoilé*, indicates his attitude. Buffon (1707-1788) was a great savant, whom we, after the frivolous fashion of hasty tourists, usually remember for having said, "*Le style est l'homme même*," and, "*Le cheval est le plus noble conquêt de l'homme*," but his books on natural history were pioneer books, and contributed to expel from the mind of his contemporaries the notion of a deity that busied itself with human affairs. These men are important *dramatis personæ*, but it is Voltaire who dominates the stage.

Voltaire is the master spirit of the century; he is its embodiment as well as its charioteer, and has dozens of claims upon the attention. He was born in Paris of a bourgeois family, his father, Maître Arouet, being a notary. He was well taught at the college of Louis le Grand by the Jesuits, drilled in those Latin classics that the *philosophes* afterwards railed at as *sottises* and *inepties puériles*. He was a lad of many talents, and was early introduced into the *beau monde*, where, eager for pleasure, distinction, and social advancement, he charmed by his wit, his satire, and his verses. He took to serious poetry, and composed the *Henriade*, an epic on Henri IV; one meets now and again a person who has read it. He prospered; the Queen, Marie Leczinska, granted him a pension and called him *mon pauvre Voltaire*. His head was turned; he mocked a Rohan. The Rohan had him cudgeled. Voltaire sent a challenge, for which audacity he was locked up in the Bastille for a few months. He went to England, where a three years' sojourn made a deep impression upon him. He busied himself with English literature and English philosophy. On his return, he and his friend, Madame

du Châtelet, worked hard to make Newton known in France. For ten years he lived away from Paris, occupied with literature and Newton's theories. From 1750 to 1753 came the visit to Frederick the Great which showed the vulgarly ludicrous side of both heroes. On his return he plunged into the struggle with the old religion.

Shameless, malicious, and naughty as a monkey, ironical, witty, delightful, his humors changing like the hues on a pigeon's neck, writing book upon book, pamphlet upon pamphlet, brazenly denying their authorship if it were prudent, scribbling letters of all sorts to everybody, writing plays, getting up theatricals, railing, praising, lying, jesting, and now and again burning with real indignation, Voltaire is the most fascinating person in French history. Napoleon stands apart, Jeanne d'Arc stands apart; Voltaire is the *esprit gaulois* in flesh and blood. Unsafe in Paris, unsafe in Geneva, he retired in 1760 to the Château of Ferney, on the Lake of Geneva, close to the border, and there he lived in company with his niece, a droll little fat lady, and received all the world. Thanks to the genius of Houdon, we all know his mocking, clever, cynical face, which is the perfect expression of his soul. I shall not attempt to criticize his literary work; all, if not admirable, is of great merit: *The Life of Charles XII of Sweden*; *Le Siècle de Louis XIV*; *Essai sur les mœurs*; *Dictionnaire philosophique*; the brilliant little stories, *Candide*, *Zadig*, and others; the plays; and, more delightful than all else, his volumes of letters. His seriousness appears in his histories, in his love of science, and in his increasing efforts on behalf of tolerance, liberty, and education. Shouting "*Écrasez l'infâme!*" he was always attacking privilege, prejudice, churchmen, Providence, miracles, the Old Testament, torture, serfdom, or venality in the administration of justice. He was not an atheist,

but a deist, and yet perfectly ready to attend mass if that were prudent. He built, at Ferney, a little chapel with the inscription, *Deo erexit Voltaire*.

I ventured to say that Voltaire was the master spirit of the century; others perhaps would disagree and claim that Rousseau (1712-1778) had touched a deeper note and had exercised a more profound influence. He certainly appealed far more directly to the heart. This brilliant, emotional, rhetorical genius has told the world very unreservedly all about himself in his *Confessions*. There the reader will find *un homme dans toute la vérité de la nature*, and be pleased or displeased, proud or ashamed of humanity, according to his tastes and breeding. The book is one of the great French classics. A poor boy, born in Geneva, of Protestant parents, he wandered through a shabby, adventurous youth, in which the singular episode with Madame de Warens, at Annecy, is the most romantic. Rousseau betook himself to Paris in pursuit of fortune. There he wrote upon music, and there he made the acquaintance of Diderot and others. He lived with an illiterate servant girl, and, in spite of the mother's protests, deposited his five babies on the steps of a foundling hospital. He had a luxuriant but wayward imagination. He believed that man in a natural state is good, amiable, and pleasant, and that if he lived according to nature he would continue to possess those qualities and be happy and content, but that an artificial system of society, with its frippery, its luxuries, and vices had corrupted him. In 1750 he published a book upon this thesis, *Discours sur les sciences et les arts*, that made him famous. To a people steeped in misery he preached hope, that there was a path back to innocence and bliss. Again, during the Seven Years' War, when public affairs were going from bad to worse, *La Nouvelle Héloïse* (1760)

diverted and refreshed a multitude of readers with its eloquent expatiation upon love, upon virtue, upon the beauties of nature. *Émile* (1762) is also a novel, written to present the author's original and fanciful ideas of how science and ethics can be taught in proper seasons and in such ways that youth can understand and absorb them. In this last book Rousseau, who had returned to Protestantism after a lapse into Catholicism to please Madame de Warens, rashly stated: "*Je crois toutes les religions bonnes quand on y sert Dieu convenablement. Le culte essentiel est celui du cœur.*" He also denied the miracles, and denied revelation. The Parlement de Paris would not submit to such blasphemy, and tried to lay hold of him; he escaped by returning to a sort of vagabond life.

The *Contrat social* was also published in 1762. Here Rousseau put forth the theory that society had been formed by a common pact between all its members, each surrendering a part of his individual rights in return for social rights, and that therefore universal consent lay behind and underneath all forms of government — in other words, that the people were sovereign; and he went on to argue that liberty and equality were necessary for the good of the State. This book, as well as *Émile*, was proscribed in Geneva, and so Switzerland was closed to the unfortunate vagabond. In fact, he was too individual to live long with any set of people; and yet, by his power of rhetoric, by his rhapsodies over virtue, over sentiment, over the beauties of nature, he inspired a multitude of people who did not know him personally with love and admiration. By his passionate teachings that but for the vices and ill adjustments of society man would live happy he contributed powerfully to bring on the Revolution; and besides that, his sentiment, his sentimentality, his love of nature, of solitude, of reverie, his cult of self,



sowed the seed of the romantic movement in French literature. Few men have impressed themselves so deeply on the world.

Here, then, under a charming surface of *hôtels* and salons, of painted ceilings and inlaid furniture, of brilliant conversation and clever letters, of Versailles, of Madame de Pompadour, you have the factors that were pulling and tugging at the political and ecclesiastical fabric — defeats on the battlefield, losses of colonies, disasters at sea, riotous extravagance, debts, taxes, bigotry, and superstition, and keen intellects that believed that in order to build up a new social system the present social system must first be pulled down.

## XXV

### THE GENERATION BEFORE THE REVOLUTION

As damaging to the monarchy as the attacks of the *philosophes* was the wretched condition of finance. During the Seven Years' War the government had the greatest difficulty in raising money; all sorts of taxes and imposts were devised, many an ingenious method of squeezing milk from stones was attempted. One minister of finance followed another. But as the *noblesse* and the Church were exempt from taxation, success was hardly to be expected. The system of letting out contracts for collecting taxes to farmers-general had the advantage of bringing in immediate sums of money, but what the public saw was a group of greedy financiers getting rich at small effort, and spending their riches in gross extravagance. Another obstacle in the way of ministers of finance lay in the Parlement, which, if it thought a new scheme of taxation would redound to the prejudice of its members, refused to register the decree enacting it. Voltaire wrote (April 2, 1764): "*Tout ce que je vois jette des semences d'une révolution qui arrivera inmanquablement et dont je n'aurai pas le plaisir d'être le témoin.*"

Matters marched swiftly on. In passing I should chronicle a few details. In 1764 Madame de Pompadour died, and a little clique of knaves managed to turn the King's eyes in the direction they wished, and Madame du Barry, a young woman with blue eyes, *une bouche délicateuse*, fair curly hair, and of elegant and aristocratic bearing, as you may see in Pajou's bust in the Louvre,

became the King's official mistress. Stanislas Leczinski died in 1766, and Lorraine reverted to France. In 1768 Genoa sold Corsica to France, just in time to enable the second son of Charles and Lætitia Bonaparte to be born a French citizen. In 1770 the prime minister, the duc de Choiseul, wishing to prevent Austria from becoming too friendly with Prussia, reversed Richelieu's policy of antagonism and procured the marriage of Maria Theresa's daughter, Marie-Antoinette, a girl of fifteen, to the Dauphin, a lad of sixteen.

The duc de Choiseul was an ardent patriot. He cast about to see how it might be possible either to win back from England a part of the lost French colonial empire, or, if not that, at least to do damage to England's overwhelming and threatening maritime superiority. He persuaded Spain to join in his plans. But times were not ripe. France was not prepared for war with England; she had to back down, and Choiseul was dismissed; but his policy bore fruit ten years later. Chancellor Maupeou succeeded him. This minister is best remembered by a famous quarrel with the Parlement de Paris, which became one of the immediate causes of the Revolution. He made a sensational move to put down the Parlement and render it subservient to absolute monarchy. The *parlements*, as I have said, were once courts of justice, charged with the duty of registering royal edicts, with the incidental right of remonstrance, but they had extended this right of remonstrance until they disputed the King's authority and claimed the right to register or not, as they chose. They were, indeed, the one body that stood between the people and absolute autocracy. Of these *parlements* there were a dozen throughout France, but that of Paris was possessed of far more extended jurisdiction than the others, embracing about one third of the

kingdom, and was by far the most important. Louis XIV had overawed the Parlement de Paris, but under the regency it had lifted up its head, and now held it very high, and, at least in the eyes of the government, had clearly overstepped its prerogatives and was infringing upon the royal authority. Louis XV was very clear as to the fullness of that authority. He said: "*En ma personne réside la puissance souveraine; de moi seul les cours tiennent leur existence et leur autorité; à moi seul appartient le pouvoir législatif, sans dépendance et sans partage.*" Maupeou, an able, silver-tongued, tenacious, ambitious little man, determined to have done with this insolent insubordination. He prepared an edict forbidding some of their practices. This the Parlement formally refused to register. The members were asked separately if they would obey; most of them refused, and then one hundred and thirty were removed from office and banished from Paris (January 1771). New judicial bodies were created, called *conseils*, and a large part of the former jurisdiction of the Parlement de Paris was transferred to them. A harder blow than this was also dealt. The places of the magistrates, formerly regarded as private property, were declared not to be so, and subject no longer to sale or bequest; and, besides that, the old practice of judges receiving gifts from litigants was abolished. The members of the *conseils* were to have salaries. It is hard for us to understand the storm that these eminently proper reforms called forth. The magistrates of all the *parlements*, the *noblesse de robe*, were outraged. So were the aristocracy, the *noblesse d'épée*, for they were closely allied to the magistrates by marriage and common interests. So were Jansenists and Gallicans, because they had been supported by the *parlements* in their struggle with Jesuits and ultramontanes. You see, the

corrupt old system was all bound together, cog interacting with cog. Maupeou stood firm; the King upheld him; so did Madame du Barry and Voltaire. The sequel belongs to the reign of Louis XVI, the incompetent inheritor of so many troubles.

These last years of Louis XV make a sorry page in French history. France, who in the great days of Louis XIV had been mistress among nations, had now become a handmaiden. Her allies of ancient days, Turkey and Poland, were reeds to lean upon. Turkey was defeated and bullied by Russia; Poland was divided between Russia, Prussia, and Austria (1772). French commerce in the East was ruined by the war between Russia and Turkey, her commerce in the West by the uncertainty of what might happen in America, now that the English colonists had fallen out with their mother country. At home no minister of finance could clean up the Augean stables. In the provinces there were bad harvests. In Paris there was bankruptcy. Paint this background with black and lurid colors; but look also in the foreground, where the old King dotes on the lovely and lively du Barry. What was national degradation to him, when she smiled and chatted, always the embodiment of fashionable elegance? Poverty, misery, shame, might encamp where they like outside Versailles, so long as within the palace and its gardens she passed before his eyes, whether she sat in her boudoir, a figure of voluptuous delight, with her jewels, her dresses, her porcelains and bibelots, or drove up the driveway, with her equipages, her coachmen, footmen, and outriders, in their liveries of scarlet and gold.

Madame du Barry may perhaps stand for the style of Louis XVI, for the period so called began before he was born, as Madame de Pompadour does for that of Louis



XV. The dividing line between the styles is usually drawn about 1750. It is too bad that the pavilion at Louveciennes was not spared to be a memorial of her. Boucher had painted the ceiling, Pajou had carved statues, Gouthière had chiseled her bronzes; all was wonderful to behold. She favored artists, and held out a helping hand to men of letters. She sent *deux bons baisers* to Voltaire, who replied:

*Quoi ! deux baisers sur la fin de ma vie !  
 Quel passeport vous daignez m'envoyer !  
 Deux, c'est trop d'un, adorable Égérie,  
 Je serais mort de plaisir au premier.*

Carlyle, who growls so over du Barrydom, was not endowed by nature with a disposition to appreciate her. But let us turn from her to the *style Louis XVI*. Of the architects, Gabriel (1710-1782) is the best known; he built on the Place de la Concorde what are now the Hotel Crillon and the Ministère de la Marine, also the Petit Trianon at Versailles. Soufflot designed the Panthéon. Of sculptors, I have mentioned Falconet; he and Clodion (1738-1814) modeled exquisite little figures for Sèvres porcelain, — satyrs, Cupids, dancing girls, nymphs, — all lovely, and all inviting the passer-by to tread the primrose path of dalliance. Pigalle and Pajou (1739-1809) I have mentioned. By far the greatest was Houdon (1741-1828), a man of real genius, a very brilliant sculptor. Everybody knows his Voltaire in the foyer of the Comédie Française, his Mirabeau, Rousseau, Diderot, and other famous men of the time. He modeled La Fayette for the State of Virginia, and, less successfully, George Washington.

The painters are as typical of the period as Falconet and Clodion. With Fragonard (1732-1806) one seems to

hear the rustle of Madame du Barry's silks and satins. Fragonard is evidently of close kin to Boucher, whose pupil he was — frankly sensuous, verging on the sensual, delighting in grace, in harmonious lines, in flesh colors and the gay hues of triumphant millinery. He makes one understand du Barry's charm, all the secrets of her influence. Greuze (1725-1805) is charming at his best. "La Cruche cassée," "La Laitière," are admirable in their way, fleeting pictures of quick-flowering girlhood too soon plucked and faded; but most of his paintings are artificial, sentimental, feebly conceived and languidly executed, while his melodramatic pictures — "The Father's Curse," for instance — belong to a taste that is past. Hubert Robert (1733-1808) stands apart with his pictures of ruins in Italy or France, some of them full of tenderness, of pathos for the forgotten things of long ago. Madame Vigée-Lebrun (1755-1842) is sentimental, soft, and facile, but at times she shows a charm and grace — not, indeed, far removed from the commonplace — that make many of her pictures very agreeable. She uses the Flemish coloring that had been more or less fashionable ever since the great Rubens had covered so much canvas with the matronly form of Marie de Médicis. She painted Marie-Antoinette, and many fashionable ladies of the time. All visitors to the Louvre know the self-conscious proclamation of maternal affection in the portrait of herself and her little daughter, enlaced in one another's arms (1787).

That same year the story of *Paul et Virginie* touched the chords of sentiment and pathos in a deeper manner. It reminds one of Madame Vigée-Lebrun, but with greater simplicity. Bernardin de Saint-Pierre's life is perhaps more interesting to modern taste than his romance. He wandered about seeking a fortune in order that he might establish a Utopia in some appropriate spot on an island

or beside a distant sea. He carried his dreams to various places, to the Island of Malta, to Catherine of Russia, to Poland, where chance and a rich lady smiled upon him for a time, to Vienna, to Dresden, to the Île-de-France (near Madagascar), and so back to Paris, where he became on terms of familiar intimacy with d'Alembert, Mlle. de Lespinasse, and sundry members of the Encyclopædia group. The adventurous, vague incompetence of his life, coupled with his literary art, and his successful flirtation with the Polish lady, bring Bernardin de Saint-Pierre very much into the charming, sentimental, sensuous scenes of Fragonard and Greuze. At times it almost seems as if he were about to embark for Cytherea in Watteau's picture, so remote is he from common daily life.

A more brilliant figure, and quite as adventurous, is Beaumarchais (1732-1799), the author of *Le Barbier de Séville* and *Le Mariage de Figaro*. This extraordinary personage is a good deal like his own Figaro, a saucy knave, with wit, inventiveness, good humor, kindness, and immense energy. The son of a watchmaker, he managed to get a footing in the King's household, proceeded from adventure to adventure, embodied himself in a disastrous lawsuit, only to turn it into the means of delighting all Paris, even old Voltaire at Ferney, by his accounts of his adversaries. Not since *Gil Blas* had anybody except Voltaire been so witty and amusing. He slipped into diplomacy, was employed on secret errands in England, then undertook to act, secretly again, as the government's agent in providing the American rebels with arms and ammunition. The *Barbier de Séville* appeared in 1775, *Le Mariage de Figaro* in 1783. The last has its place in political history, for it contained covert attacks on the whole system of the old régime. During the Revolution,

though he tried to serve the revolutionary government, Beaumarchais narrowly escaped the guillotine. His life is even more interesting and diverting than his writings.

This meagre enumeration of names is enough to show that the period before the Revolution is, in art and literature, one of the most charming in French history.

## XXVI

### TURGOT, NECKER, AND THE AMERICAN WAR

LOUIS XV died in May 1774. His grandson, Louis XVI, was neither more nor less than a lout. In person he was square, short, and sturdy, with a tendency to fat. His features were coarse. He had a great appetite, and was fond of the chase. He was simple and of good disposition, and desired to do his duty, to purify the Court and restore prosperity to his people. The Queen was a little younger than he, a gay, high-bred, ignorant, pleasure-loving girl, of an appearance so distinguished and with so many attributes of beauty that many persons thought her beautiful. Her private character, though often besmirched by the Jacobins, was free from reproach except for extreme levity.

Matters looked well at first. Madame du Barry was sent away. The young gentlemen of the Court, La Fayette and others, were noticeable for their good behavior. Good counselors were called in — Maurepas, virtually prime minister, Vergennes, secretary for foreign affairs, and Turgot, minister of finance. But difficulties soon cropped up. The old Parlement de Paris that Maupeou had done away with in 1770 for disobedience had become more and more popular during its absence. The public regarded it as the guardian of their rights, a bulwark against tyranny; and all the discontented joined in its praise — the duc d'Orléans and some other great nobles, the old Bar, those who liked the Parlement as the enemy of



the Jesuits, young men of liberal ideas, and so on. This discontent expressed itself more and more loudly. The King had no will of his own; Maupeou was dismissed. That was not enough. There were riots; Maupeou was burned in effigy. The King gave way; the old Parlement was recalled and reinstated in its ancient privileges, the magistrates became again proprietors of their offices, to sell or bequeath, and the substitute Parlement was converted back into a council. In the first encounter between the absolute monarchy and the spirit of opposition, the King, owing to his infirmity of will, had been worsted.

The next troubles rose over Turgot's reforms. Turgot (1727-1781) was a serious man, with something of a Plutarchian presence, wholly devoted to economics, finance, and the public good. He won the King's confidence at once, and started in with all the zeal of a reformer who sees Utopia hardly a half-mile in front of him. To make a state strong, he argued, it must be prosperous. Prosperity depends upon production and trade. You must stimulate individual effort and encourage competition; you must make the interchange of commodities free, take off all the *octrois*, *impôts*, and taxes of one kind and another that now strangle trade, you must break up the mediæval guilds, free the workingmen from the yoke of the masters, you must abolish regulations, fixed prices, and meddlesome interference, you must let each man, each district, produce what they best can; in the political order you must be tolerant; in religious matters you must let people worship as they like; and you must have done with war. All these reforms, Turgot, in accord with the liberal thought of the time, believed could be effected only by an enlightened autocrat. Louis XVI, he was convinced, acting through him, would be such a human benefactor. So he set off at a great pace.

He had some hard luck in bad crops, but he had too great faith in the obvious worth of his measures. There happened what always happens to overzealous reformers. The large public that should reap the benefits of his reforms was ignorant, prejudiced, unorganized, while all the special interests that were hurt were alert, intriguing, haranguing, beseeching, and threatening. Edicts, however, were drawn up to cut down the *octroi* (a tax on merchandise entering a town), to curtail the system of farming out taxes, to introduce economy by suppressing unearned salaries, to give internal freedom of circulation to grain, to admit grain from abroad, and to do away with the *corvée* — that is, forced unpaid labor upon public roads. The liberal world was delighted; Voltaire threw up his hat and cheered, hailing “a new Heaven and a new earth.”

But the opposition grew stronger, more united and firmer; and, as I say, bad crops made trouble. Probably malcontents took advantage of the scarcity to stir the populace to riot. Mobs attacked flour mills and bakeries; in Paris the rioters marched out to Versailles up to the palace walls. It was necessary for regiments of musketeers to patrol the city. The Parlement, arrogant and usurping, joined in the general cry against Turgot; the clergy, too — partly for interfering with their privileges, and partly because he was a freethinker; the Court as well; and finally the Queen, because Turgot was opposed to reviving the abolished office of *surintendante de la maison de la Reine*, a place that the Queen desired for the charming and impecunious princesse de Lamballe, with a salary of a hundred and fifty thousand livres. The forces of reaction were too strong for the weak, well-disposed King, and, within less than two years of office, Turgot was dismissed (May 1776). Voltaire said: “I

shall never be comforted; I have seen the golden age that M. Turgot was creating coming into being and then perish."

In the autumn of that year the celebrated Necker joined the ministry, and before long was put at the head of the finances. Though he had lived in Paris for many years, when he had made a large fortune, he labored under the disadvantage of being a Protestant and a foreigner, for he came from Geneva. His wife held a salon, and her *vendredis* were much frequented by men distinguished in science and literature. Madame Necker was an intellectual lady, resembling a little too much, it is said, a school-ma'am, and is, perhaps, best known to English readers as the lady whom a young Englishman had wooed but had forsaken at his father's behest: "I sighed as a lover; I obeyed as a son." And with them, beginning at the age of eleven her attendance at the *vendredis* to listen to the clever Parisian talk on things of the mind, their daughter Germaine, destined to a renown, under her married name, Madame de Staël, as great as her father's or as that of her mother's filial suitor, Edward Gibbon. Necker commended himself to the King by his moral conduct as well as by his accomplishments as a man of finance.

Necker adopted a plan of remarkable simplicity. He threw the whole burden on the future; he borrowed and borrowed, and borrowed again. The public was delighted to find the treasury filling up. Necker then published a *Compte rendu*, which put the receipts at 264 millions of livres and expenses at 254 millions. Nothing could make more agreeable reading, and everybody read it. The figures, however, stated only the *ordinary* income and outgo; the extraordinary items were omitted. As a matter of fact, the receipts were 436 millions, and the expenses 526. He suggested reforms, and they were the

cause of his undoing. All those affected unfavorably by the proposed reforms were up in arms; rival economists exposed the fallacies in the *Compte rendu*; the Polignacs and other great nobles were hostile; the Queen became cold. The King, as always, yielded to the pressure of discontent, and Necker resigned (1781).

In the meantime, the ministers of foreign affairs had been facing the question whether France would submit to the place of complete inferiority to the British Empire in which she had been thrust by the Seven Years' War. The alternatives were submission or war. The duc de Choiseul had done his best to reorganize the army and navy, and his successors had followed his lead; but such preparations were costly. Vergennes felt that the struggle must come, and took care that France should not be involved in any continental war. He watched the breach between the American colonies and their mother country with close attention. There, if at all, would come France's opportunity. Lexington and Bunker Hill were fought in 1775; the colonies declared their independence in 1776. A young nobleman, of high character, ardent temperament, and great ambition for renown, the Marquis de La Fayette, aged nineteen, chartered a ship at his own expense and, concealing his plans from the government and from his family, sailed across the ocean to offer his sword to the American Congress. Many other officers and adventurers went. Already, in 1775, our friend Beaumarchais had been writing from London to his government that the colonies were surely lost to England, and advising secret loans to the insurgents.

Nevertheless, France could not run the risk of embarking on an unsuccessful war. Bankers and merchants were fearful. Spain, invited to come in, held off. So Vergennes bided his time. The surrender of Burgoyne at

Saratoga (October 1777) decided him, and a treaty of alliance with the American colonies was signed in February 1778. That same year Admiral d'Estaing sailed with a fleet, and in 1780 the comte de Rochambeau took an army over. French aid turned the scales. La Fayette, with great skill and success, conducted a campaign in Virginia against Lord Cornwallis that ended in the latter's entrenchment at Yorktown. Thither Washington and Rochambeau went by land, Admiral de Grasse by sea. Cornwallis capitulated on October 19, 1781. La Fayette wrote to Vergennes, "*La pièce est jouée, Monsieur le comte, le cinquième acte vient de finir.*" Within the year negotiations for peace were begun, and the treaty followed in 1783. France did not get much, — Senegal, lost by treaty in 1763, and two small islands off Newfoundland, with privileges of fishery near by and the right to fortify Dunkirk, — but she had accomplished her purpose, she had broken the world-wide dominion of Great Britain. And now she had to pay for her effort. When the French government made up its mind to acknowledge the independence of the United States, she had come to the fork of the road; one branch led to a humble acquiescence in Great Britain's superiority, the other to war, and war led to bankruptcy, and bankruptcy to revolution. How clearly Vergennes saw whither the road he chose would lead, I do not know, but he must have had a heart-sickening apprehension of it.



## XXVII

### THE SUMMONS OF THE STATES-GENERAL

WE have now reached a period where bias still sways the judgment of historians. Republicans, monarchists, socialists, do not agree in their opinions of the action in the great drama that is about to be set up on the stage of France. Everyone is free to follow his natural sympathies; I follow mine. The King, who was personally fearless and wished to do right, seems to be a clodpole, with no tastes but for hunting and mechanical contrivances, and with no will. The Queen, a product of autocratic privilege, borrowed trouble by considering it her duty, urged on by her mother and the Austrian ambassador, to press the interests of Austria at the French Court, and procured for herself the hateful title *l'Autrichienne*. Perhaps because she was a woman, perhaps because of her beauty, or of the pathos of the black tragedy that hangs over the Petit Trianon, the make-believe dairy and the princely milkmaids, one's sympathies are far more with her than with the King. The princesse de Lamballe was careless, impecunious, and devoted to the Queen; the comtesse de Polignac, said to have been above moral prejudices, was less disinterested, but equally fair to look at. All the courtiers spent their time in intriguing to dip their hands in the royal treasury, and most of them were successful. The cost of the various royal establishments — *la maison du Roi, la maison de la Reine, de Monsieur*, the King's next brother — and of their parasites cost about 40,000,000 livres a year, a twelfth part of the revenues. The Polignacs received 700,000 livres a year; the Noailles family,

into which La Fayette married, 2,000,000; the princesse de Lamballe, 100,000; and so on. This wanton prodigality upon wastrels was not calculated to win for the Court the love of the hungry, miserable multitude, which was staggering under taxes and innumerable feudal burdens. One would have supposed that all of the Court would feel it prudent to be circumspect, but instead of circumspection comes the affair of the Queen's necklace. Goethe, talking to Eckermann, said that this affair was in a certain way the effective cause of the Revolution. At any rate, it proclaimed the rotten state of the French Court to all Europe.

Some jewelers had got together a very valuable string of pearls, hoping that the Queen would buy it. The Queen was short of money, and, aware of the need of retrenchment, refused. No one else could afford it. There was a hanger-on of Court society, a sort of Becky Sharp, Madame de Lamotte, who lived by her wits. She spied an opportunity for a brilliant fraud. Her instrument was a great noble, but a contemptible profligate, Cardinal Rohan, who had managed to earn the Queen's ill will, and was kept out of royal favor in consequence. Madame de Lamotte told the Cardinal that she could effect a reconciliation, wheedled some money from him, and, in order to secure him further, promised him a secret interview with the Queen. He was to go to the gardens of Versailles by night, walk down a certain path, and, meeting the Queen, was to kneel and ask forgiveness, but if he should hear a warning call he must instantly disappear. So it was. An elegant form, the very height, carriage, and contours of the Queen! Rohan rushed forward to kneel. A warning call! He hastily retreated. Madame de Lamotte, having secured Rohan, went to the jewelers, said that the Queen had changed her mind and would

buy the necklace, but wished to keep the purchase secret, and that Cardinal Rohan would act as intermediary. Madame de Lamotte produced the Queen's signature, and took the jewels on her behalf. Rohan was to advance the money for the first installment of the purchase price. But Rohan's purse was limited. The jewelers were asked to postpone the payments; they became suspicious and made inquiries. The Queen denied all knowledge of the matter, and demanded an investigation. The Cardinal was arrested and tried before the Parlement. The whole story came out. The Cardinal was the dupe of Madame de Lamotte. An accomplice had simulated the Queen. The trial became a great political affair. The Queen, furious that it should be said that she would give a rendezvous by night to Rohan, pressed for conviction. The clergy, the Sorbonne, members and dependents of the great Rohan family, and all who were discontented with the Court, and almost all Paris, were for the Cardinal. The trial lasted over six months, September 1785 to May 1786. It was clear that the Cardinal had been duped, and he was acquitted. The King, in spite of the verdict, banished him to the abbey of la Chaise-Dieu in Auvergne. The Queen was really innocent, but the public believed her guilty of a base attempt to cheat the jewelers, and their indignation that they should be taxed to the famine point in order to maintain a group of crowned and coroneted knaves in prodigal luxury grew more and more violent.

The times were critical. The load of debt was enormous, and income was dwindling down. The ministers of finance looked like spent swimmers in an angry sea. The courtiers opposed any curtailment of their pensions; the Parlement refused to register any edict that diminished the revenues of their members. In 1783 Calonne became

comptroller-general. He was a clever, agreeable man, of distinguished manners, and of an impulsive, imprudent, and not wholly trustworthy character. As with Necker, his expedient was to borrow, — indeed there was nothing else to do, — in the hope that within a few years the natural wealth of the country would set everything straight. He argued that what was necessary was public confidence, and that if he could make things pleasant for the more dangerous and the more discontented, by continuing or even increasing their pensions and exemptions, and also convince the public by spending freely that the treasury was in a sound condition, he would then be left unmolested, and before long France would get upon her feet again. He undertook a good many improvements for the sake of trade; he repaired and enlarged quays, dykes, canals, highroads, and he tried to abolish the strangling customs duties between the provinces, and to establish a uniform tariff. None of these palliations were of use. The ministry of finance had reached a blind alley. Borrowing was impossible; more taxes impossible, too; the only remedy lay in a complete change in the fiscal system, particularly by the abolition of exemption from taxation for the privileged orders, the *noblesse* and the clergy. As Parlement blocked all reforms in taxation, it was necessary to call in some new force to make head against Parlement. Calonne suggested an assembly of Notables.

Accordingly, this assembly, some one hundred and fifty distinguished persons, — *grands seigneurs*, magistrates, prelates, administrative officers of the provinces, deputies from cities, and so on, — met in February 1787 at Versailles. Calonne laid before them his proposals. He admitted that the treasury, instead of being full, was in a pitiful plight, and suggested these remedies: local assem-

blies in the provinces charged with certain duties; a land tax on all the real estate in the kingdom; subjection of the clergy to taxation; diminution of the *taille* (a grievous tax on the laboring class); free trade in grain within the kingdom; a tax in money substituted for the *corvée*, and so on. All the proposals, however, were hedged about with modifications in order to render them less repellent.

Such a revolution in the system of taxation was indispensable, but it needed a monarch of a stout heart to force it upon a body whose privileges were cut into by almost every article. The archbishop of Narbonne said: "M. de Calonne wishes to bleed France, and he asks the Notables whether he shall make the incision in the foot, arm, or jugular artery. . . . Do you take us for sheep?"

The proposals as to provincial assemblies, free internal trade, and commutation of the *corvée* were agreed to; the others were rejected. La Fayette, seeing how little was accomplished, got up and demanded the convocation of the States-General. The States-General had not met since 1614, and it had been regarded as obsolete, but now all were at their wits' ends. Parlement repeated the proposal — not that it wished such a convocation, but it used it as an excuse for refusing to register a stamp tax which the King commanded, alleging that only the States-General had the constitutional right to consent to a permanent tax. This led to another bitter quarrel between King and Parlement, the King ordering edicts to be registered, the Parlement refusing. The King, in substance, repeated Chancellor Maupeou's experiment and dismembered the Parlement. All the *parlements* in France expressed sympathy with their dismembered leader, and the people, regarding the *parlements* as their only protection against absolute tyranny, sided with



them. Nevertheless, the action of Parlement meant national bankruptcy.

The whole social fabric quivered with the first tremors of an earthquake. Some believed that they saw the dawn of a new day. Optimists in all the higher ranks of life, — *grands seigneurs* like La Fayette, lesser nobles like Mirabeau, *philosophes*, barristers, and so on, — calling themselves *Les Nationaux*, banded together to encourage and develop liberal principles. Oddly enough, everybody hoped to gain by a meeting of the National Assembly. Optimists all — King, ministry, *noblesse*, clergy, commons. So, finally, a royal edict was issued summoning the States-General to meet in Versailles in the following May.

It was high time. The State had become virtually bankrupt; that summer, payments were suspended. There was immense excitement. The public insisted that Necker, in whom they had faith, should be recalled. Necker could do little, but judged it prudent to reinstate the Parlement. The weakness of the government encouraged the mob, and there was rioting in Paris for two weeks during the month of September. Then came elections to the States-General, and discussions as to procedure. The two privileged orders, the *noblesse* and the clergy, wished to sit separate and apart, and so preserve to each a right of veto. The *Tiers État*, the commons, claimed that they, being immensely more numerous, should have a double representation in order to be as many as the other two orders together, and also demanded that all three orders should sit together. L'Abbé Sieyès wrote his famous pamphlet, *Qu'est-ce que le Tiers État?* The whole kingdom was in agitation over the matter. The King did not know what to do, but at Necker's instance decreed that the deputies should number at least a thousand, that they should be elected in electoral dis-

tricts according to population and the amount of taxes paid, and that the deputies of the *Tiers État* should be as numerous as the other two. This last article was greeted with enthusiasm throughout the country.

There was little ground for rejoicing over anything. The prospect was black. Business had gone to rack and ruin, and great numbers of artisans and laborers had been thrown out of employment; there were some 120,000 beggars in Paris — near a quarter of the inhabitants. And rain, floods, hail, or drought had diminished the crops one half; the price of bread rose rapidly, and in spite of Necker's efforts to stop exportation of grain, to facilitate importation, and to organize charities, there was insufficient food. There were riots all through the country from Provence to Brittany. In Paris, when it was reputed that two rich employers had said that a workman could live very well on fifteen sous a day, when a loaf of bread cost fourteen and a half, a furious mob sacked their houses. In the country dangerous tramps prowled about — dismissed soldiers, ex-galley slaves, smugglers, young men and old, out of work, angry and desperate. The local authorities were afraid to arrest so many, and this revelation of weakness encouraged marauders. Savage words were heard: "*Écrasez bourgeois et gentil-hommes*"; "*On devrait mettre le feu aux quatre coins du Château de Versailles.*" With sparks flying all about, and so much dry tinder at hand, a conflagration was inevitable.

Full of hope nevertheless, the country proceeded to the election of deputies, each order by itself. For the Third Estate there was virtually manhood suffrage, the age of franchise being twenty-five; the electors elected an electoral body, and that elected the representatives. In all there were 1165 deputies — 285 of the *noblesse*, of

whom 90 were liberal, including La Fayette; 280 of the clergy, of whom the parish priests, nearly 200, were also liberal; and 600 members of the Third Estate. In all, about three quarters of the assembly were liberals, or reformers. The reforms they advocated were: an end of despotic power, no more *lettres de cachet*, no Bastille, no arbitrary interference with the courts of justice, no exceptional tribunals, no expropriation without compensation, no repudiation of the public debt, no excessive taxation, no torture, and a general reform of the criminal law. These demands, and many others, were contained in *cahiers de doléance*, statements of grievances, drawn up by the constituencies and brought up by their respective representatives.

On May 5, 1789, the deputies met in a hall at Versailles, all on tiptoe with hopes and uncertainties. Causes of discord abounded — between the privileged and the non-privileged, the *noblesse* of the Court and that of the provinces, the great prelates and the parish priests, the townsfolk and peasants, province and province; in short, there was cleavage upon cleavage, fissure upon fissure. And in the great palace hard by a poor, dull, conscientious King, without character, infirm of purpose, unstable as water.

## XXVIII

### THE STATES-GENERAL

ON May 5, 1789, the States-General met in the Hôtel des Menus Plaisirs, on the avenue de Paris, at Versailles, a little before you come to the palace. The question whether the three orders should sit together or sit separately forced itself at once to the front. The nobles held off; the clergy were divided, the great prelates saying no, the parish priests wishing to make common cause with the Third Estate. The Court leaned towards the preservation of privilege. But the leaders of the Third Estate were determined. Among these were: Mirabeau, with his great passionate pock-marked face, his ample knowledge and his oratory; l'Abbé Sieyès, with his ready intelligence, his happy phraseology, and parliamentary skill; and Bailly, an astronomer, an academician, modest, brave, and determined; Barnave, from Grenoble; Pétion, from Chartres; Robespierre, a young barrister from Arras; and many others afterwards notorious.

Sieyès moved that their body, the Commons, as they called themselves, should assume the name of the *Assemblée Nationale* (June 17); the motion was overwhelmingly carried, and then the Assembly voted that taxation without its consent was illegal. This was a plain usurpation of authority. The revolution had begun. The King, under a pretext, closed their hall for a few days. When the deputies arrived, they found themselves locked out. It was raining. At the suggestion of Dr. Guillotin, they went round the corner to the Jeu de Paume, — you may see it still, — a bare building with no furniture other than

a table and a few benches. The deputies were wet and angry. An oath was proposed that they should not separate until they had made a constitution. Bailly stood up on a table and took the oath; all but one followed his example. They urged the privileged orders to join with them in common session.

On June 23 they again met in the Salle des Menus Plaisirs. The King quashed their resolution of June 17. But after he and the privileged orders had withdrawn, the Third Estate voted to stand firm by their resolution, and their position was soon strengthened, for most of the lower clergy joined them, and nearly fifty of the *noblesse*, with the duc-d'Orléans, the duc de La Rochefoucauld, Lally-Tollendal, a Montmorency, and a Latour-Maubourg at their head. La Fayette had been instructed to vote with his order, and felt bound by his instructions. The tension was great. The King and his council took alarm; he sent word to the privileged orders that the safety of his person was in danger, and bade them unite in one body with the Third Estate. In this way the first line of defense of privilege was carried.

The reactionary members of the King's council became more and more frightened. Orders were sent to his foreign troops, Germans and Switzers, to come up to Paris and Versailles. The populace of Paris went wild with indignation at the threat of military coercion. Even the moneyed interests objected; they were apprehensive lest the government might reassume absolute power and declare national bankruptcy. In the city, *les gardes-françaises*, a royal regiment, fraternized with the people. Some soldiers refused to obey their officers, and were put in prison. The mob broke open the jail and released them. The Assembly spied its opportunity to curry favor with the army, and begged His Majesty to show "the natural



clemency of his heart." His Majesty, always weak, pardoned the mutineers, with the consequence that disaffection spread, and tainted even the foreign regiments. In order to have a pretext for dismissing these regiments, Mirabeau suggested a *garde bourgeoise*; Sieyès supported him. Paris clamored for it. And at this very time the King, who had an unfailing aptitude for doing the wrong thing, gave heed to his most reactionary advisers and dismissed Necker, the only minister who had the public confidence, and appointed in his stead a declared opponent of the revolution.

Necker's dismissal greatly disturbed the Assembly, and threw Paris into a paroxysm of excitement. Crowds met in the Palais-Royal. This palace had originally been built by Richelieu, and had been occupied by Anne of Austria and her two sons, Louis XIV and Philippe d'Orléans. The Regent Orléans had also lived there; and now his grandson occupied it, Philippe-Égalité, who had built an addition to the palace, round about the garden, consisting of shops and cafés. This garden had become a popular rendezvous. In the afternoon excited orators, Camille Desmoulins among them, jumped up on tables and harangued the crowd. They picked green leaves — the color of hope — from the trees, donned them as cockades, and called on every man to arm and defend the city from the foreign mercenaries who were marching on Paris. The crowd tumultuously tramped through the streets, and, coming into collision with a troop of Royal German Cavalry, raised a cry that the people were attacked. There was a general rush for arms and ammunition. Men and women pillaged gun shops. Members of the *gardes-françaises* joined the manifestants. A meeting of citizens considered the situation; a permanent committee was appointed, a militia organized, a patrol sent about the

town. On July 13 a report spread abroad that large quantities of powder had been stored in the Bastille. The next day the mob marched through the faubourg Saint-Antoine and up to the fortress. The governor, de Launay, had thirty Switzers and eighty old or invalided soldiers in the garrison. He said that he would not fire unless attacked. There were menaces and misapprehension. Two men got into the inner precincts of the Bastille and let down a drawbridge. The mob crowded in. The garrison fired. There were cries of treachery; muskets opened upon the defenders, and *gardes-françaises* helped drag up cannon into place. Many of the assailants were killed or wounded. A capitulation was arranged, the gates were opened, and the mob swept in; they sacked the Bastille, let out the seven prisoners, — three weak-minded persons, two wastrels, and two criminals, — siezed de Launay, dragged him through the streets to the Hôtel de Ville, where a cook cut off his head with a pen-knife. Next they came upon the *Prévôt des Marchands*, one of the recently elected committee, charged him with treason, and cut off his head. The two heads were then fixed on pikes and paraded about town.

Meanwhile there was high excitement at Versailles. The Assembly asked the King to send away the foreign regiments and recall Necker. The King shilly-shallied; he thought of flight, rejected the idea, and then complied with both demands. It argued ill for the future that the National Assembly took advantage of the violence of the mob to extort concessions from the King. The comte d'Artois hurried out of France, and the emigration of the *noblesse* began. On July 15 a deputation from the Assembly headed by Bailly, president, and La Fayette, vice-president, went to Paris, and was received with wild enthusiasm at the Hôtel de Ville, on the Place de Grève,

where de Launay's head had been hacked off the day before. Bailly was crowned with flowers and acclaimed mayor of Paris, and La Fayette commander-in-chief of the city militia, now known as the National Guard. La Fayette, adding the monarchical white to the city's colors red and blue, made a tricolor cockade, and said, "I bring you a cockade of liberty that shall make the tour of the world." On the seventeenth the King visited the city. Escorted by La Fayette, he passed through a long line of the National Guard, armed with all sorts of nondescript weapons, to the Hôtel de Ville. There Bailly, amid frantic cheers, presented him with a tricolor cockade. Nevertheless, alarm, disorder, and crime continued. On the twenty-third, in spite of all that La Fayette could do, an official obnoxious to the mob was hanged to a lamp-post opposite the Hôtel de Ville. As his head was being fixed upon a pike, up came his son-in-law, whom the mob suspected of cutting his grain too soon in order to keep up the price. They massacred him and tore his heart out.

There was need of masterful action to prevent the mob from running wild through Paris. The middle classes, the bourgeoisie, were in a difficult predicament; they wished to wrench their liberties from the privileged orders, but they also wished to save their lives and property from the mob. So they established a new city government, the Commune, which represented their class, and all their able-bodied men enlisted in the National Guard, in order to have a body of militia to defend their interests. Similar action was taken in all the principal cities. But the country districts were in a bad way. Great excitement led to a thousand apprehensions and the wildest fears. Rumors of bands of brigands spread from village to village, followed by other rumors of foreign invasions — that the comte d'Artois was marching on Versailles at the head of

an army, and so on. A cloud of Black Fear, as it is called, rolled across the land. Quite beside themselves, the peasants ran amuck. They burned châteaux, they pillaged and robbed, they devastated and ruined, they destroyed all old records of titles, rights, feudal dues, grants, concessions, taxes, imposts — every parchment and paper they could lay hands on that gave the government or the *noblesse* rights over them. With axe and fire they destroyed the feudal system. At Versailles the National Assembly, in a long series of decrees, nominally did away with by enactment what the peasants had already done away with in corporal substance. They passed a declaration of the Rights of Man, recognizing, as they said, that “ignorance, neglect, and contempt of the rights of man are the sole causes of public ills and the corruption of governments,” and “in the presence and under the auspices of *l'Être suprême*” they adopted the articles of the new order — personal liberty, freedom of thought, of religious belief, of the press, equality before the law, and so on.

Greater difficulty was experienced in coming to an agreement as to the form of government and the royal prerogatives. The Patriots and Moderates fell apart. The Moderates asked the King to remove the National Assembly farther from Paris; but the King, who never could make up his mind to take a decisive step, said no. So they stayed at Versailles and debated. The Patriots wished for one chamber, whereas the Moderates wished for an upper house, and the latter were again divided as to whether its members should be hereditary or elective. But the sharpest conflict rose over the royal veto. The Patriots were ready to concede a right of veto for future current legislation, but not for the articles of the constitution, as they regarded them, which they had adopted or

proposed to adopt. At the height of all this, the King sent for a regiment of troops stationed near the Flemish frontier (September). The regiment came. The Court and the aristocrats in the King's service seized the occasion to show what fools they were. The officers of the *Garde du Corps* gave a banquet, in a hall of the palace, to the officers of the Flanders regiment; too much wine was drunk, and many foolish things were said, in disrespect to the nation. The King and Queen showed themselves at it. Cockades, not tricolor, but white, were put on. The National Assembly took this rash action in ill part; Mirabeau thundered forth his eloquent periods. Paris went mad.

Already there was trouble in the city. The new city government, the Commune, as I have said, represented the bourgeoisie, and did not satisfy the radicals, who organized a local government in each district of the city, and local clubs to advocate the extremer forms of liberty. A young lawyer, of great personal force and energy, Danton, spoke with extreme audacity in the club of the Cordeliers; Marat, a man whom envy and ambition drove well on the way to madness, founded a newspaper, *l'Ami du Peuple*, and proposed to break all the fetters of slavery; Camille Desmoulins wrote gay and bitter pamphlets; others less famous harangued, or wrote, or rioted, according to their abilities. Into this tinder box was flung the fiery news of the banquet at Versailles. As usual, the Palais-Royal was the centre of agitation. Orators demanded a march upon Versailles. Cries were heard, "Death to the aristocrats!" "Down with the Queen!"

The next day, October 5, a multitude of women, with many men as well, starting from the poorer quarters of the city, proceeded to carry out the plan. On to Ver-



sailles! The crowd swelled as it went. The sympathies of the National Guard were with the populace; La Fayette refused to go himself, and forbade them, but he was powerless. The Guards would not obey, some cried "Hang him," and in order to prevent ill coming to the King he gave way and rode out at their head on the road to Versailles. The distance was some twelve miles, and it was raining. On that day the King and the National Assembly were in particular disaccord; the King had refused to approve both the partial constitution and the Declaration of Rights, and had gone hunting. Word was brought to him that a vast rabble of women, hungry, wet, tired, muddy, had marched out from Paris to the railings of the palace, crying for bread and cursing the aristocrats. He hurried back, and as usual yielded. He told the women that he would provide bread, and the National Assembly that he accepted constitution and Declaration of Rights. But the crowd were still in an angry mood, and pressed against the palace gates, saying that they would take the King to Paris. Late in the evening La Fayette arrived with the National Guard, and promised to protect the Royal Family. The King's *Garde du Corps* were posted within the palings of the park, and La Fayette's Guards outside. In the small hours of the night La Fayette, physically exhausted, threw himself down on a sofa in the house of a friend for a brief sleep.

Early in the morning, through a gate, opened probably by treachery, the mob forced its way into the palace. A soldier trying to bar their way was killed and his head stuck on a pike. The brutal crowd pushed up the great stairway that led to the Queen's apartments, killed another soldier and broke from one room into another. The Queen, half clad, escaped into the King's apartments. National Guards came up and drove the mob back; but

it gathered thick in front of the palace, and demanded to see the royal family. La Fayette appeared on the balcony with the Queen and kissed her hand. The King stepped forth, too. The mob shouted that he must go to Paris. The King replied that he was ready to do what his *bon peuple* wished, and that he, the Queen, and his children would go with them. So it was done. The mud-stained, bedraggled multitude of women and men from the slums, all armed with guns, pikes, hatchets, or clubs, and wearing tricolor cockades of some description or other, followed by the National Guard and the Flanders regiment and the Swiss bodyguard, with the royal family in a coach, La Fayette riding beside it, trooped back the twelve weary miles to Paris. Mayor Bailly welcomed them at the entrance to the city; the King replied that he found himself *toujours avec plaisir et confiance au milieu de sa bonne ville de Paris*. And, to do him justice, he had no personal fear. He was extremely phlegmatic. His diary for these three days contains these entries: "October 5. Shooting by Châtillon gate, 81 bagged; interrupted by circumstances; went and returned on horseback." "October 6. Left for Paris at half-past twelve; stopped at Hôtel de Ville; dinner and bed at the Tuileries." "October 7. Nothing; my aunts came to dinner."

In this manner, after one hundred and twenty years of absence, the Court returned to Paris. In the Assembly, which had followed the Court, three parties shaped themselves: partisans of the old order, moderate liberals who thought that matters had gone quite far enough, and the more radical who wished for further changes. This third party was much the largest, and in itself was divided into many groups. So constituted, the Assembly addressed itself to its colossal task: equality before the law; offices open to all; the status of Jews, of Protestants, of

slaves in the colonies; reform of the criminal code and of judicial procedure; trial by jury; liberty of the press; ecclesiastical property; seigniorial rights; foreign commerce; internal trade; the public debt; taxation; and so on. Of all these measures, the most momentous was the confiscation of all the property of the Church, and the consequent breach with Rome.

Relief for the treasury was of prime importance, since bankruptcy might play into the hands of the counter-revolutionists. Paper moneys, *assignats*, to the extent of 120,000,000 livres were issued, secured by *les biens nationaux* — that is, confiscated property of the Church, royal domains, estates of émigrés, and such. Later more *assignats* were issued. Coin disappeared; forgers got to work both at home and abroad. The rates of exchange increased. In January 1791 an *assignat* for 100 livres fell to 91; in May to 85; in September to 81. Prices rose. But, in spite of the alienation of a great part of the clergy and of ill success in finance, a great revolution had been accomplished. Property had been released from ancient servitudes, trade and labor from all sorts of mediæval restrictions, and a fair measure of equality of obligation and equality of opportunity established.

In the meantime, however, it was too soon to profit by these reforms and the country was restless and disturbed. Great numbers of nobles had emigrated — over 200,000 passports had been granted within two months. The comte d'Artois, the King's younger brother, was intriguing abroad; the comte de Provence, the King's next brother, was interfering at home; the duc d'Orléans was full of nefarious schemes. Everywhere plots were discovered or alleged to be discovered. Riots were frequent, murder not uncommon. Nevertheless, two men, had they been able to work together, might have saved the monarchy — La

Fayette and Mirabeau; both believed that for France a constitutional monarchy was better than a republic. La Fayette, as commander-in-chief of the National Guard, was the most powerful man in the kingdom, but his powers were illusory, for they depended on his personal popularity, and not on disciplined obedience, of which there was little or none. Mirabeau, by his oratory and his force, had great influence with the Assembly; conscious of his own talents, ambitious of power, he made a bargain with the Court by which he received large sums of money in return for his support, and he honestly desired to prop the dilapidated throne. But Mirabeau was jealous of La Fayette, and La Fayette distrusted Mirabeau, whose private character was bad, and the two men could not work together.

Still, hope was triumphant, and liberty, equality, and fraternity capered on merrily. To celebrate the general joy a great fête was held on the anniversary of the fall of the Bastille. A multitude of volunteers cleared the field between the Hôtel des Invalides and the École Militaire. Men and women of all classes and ranks worked together with shovel, rake, and pickaxe. The age of Saturn had returned. On the day, July 14, all Paris gathered there in tricolor cockades. The saintly bishop of Autun, Talleyrand, celebrated mass; General La Fayette went up to the altar, swore fidelity to the Nation, the Law, and the King. Then the vast multitude, including the King, amid great cheers, took the same oath. All that could kissed La Fayette's hand, his accoutrements, his horse; there were multitudinous embracings, and hurrahs at the dawn of perpetual love and peace. Hope had its brief innings and scored heavily. *Ça ira, ça ira, ça ira!*

The clouds soon gathered on this radiant morning. There was trouble in the army between the officers, aristocrats of the *ancien régime*, and the men, who were drunk





THE ARREST OF LOUIS XVI AT VARENNES

*From a contemporary print*





with the new wine of equality and fraternity. The garrison stationed at Nancy revolted, and a brisk battle was needed to reduce the mutineers to obedience. There was trouble in the Church: many of the clergy took the oath to support the new ecclesiastical constitution adopted by the National Assembly; others refused, and were persecuted. The Court floundered to right and to left; hating La Fayette, it placed its hope on Mirabeau, but Mirabeau died (April 1791). His body was buried in the Panthéon, which had recently been completed and dedicated: *Aux Grands Hommes, la Patrie reconnaissante*. In Paris there was a sharp cleavage between the conservative bourgeoisie, who had established their city government, the Commune, and the proletariat, now organized in the several districts, and led by fanatical men, who harangued mightily in their radical clubs. In the Jacobin Club, rue Saint-Honoré, Maximilien Robespierre was the dominant figure; while across the river at the Cordeliers, *les amis des droits de l'homme et du citoyen*, Danton ranted and roared. Ideas of democracy swelled and swelled, and among them republicanism and socialism showed themselves; ideas of law, discipline, and order passed into desuetude. Then the poor King at last listened to those friends who had been counseling him to save himself. The flight to Varennes (June 1791) is a pitiful story. Incompetence and indecision wrecked a well-conceived plan. The King was recognized, arrested, and brought back. On the return journey a loyal nobleman attempted to ride up to the royal coach and assure the King of his devotion. He was massacred by the captors. "What's that?" the King asked. "Oh, nothing; they are killing a man." The flight gave the deathblow to the constitutional monarchy, and sealed the King's doom.

## XXIX

### TRIUMPH OF THE JACOBINS

THE flight to Varennes crystallized the situation. The excitement was intense; nobody knew whether there might not be foreign invasion or civil war. The immediate question was what should be done with the King; should he be suspended, should he be deposed? The cleft between the constitutionalists and the democrats, between moderates and radicals, deepened and broadened. The Assembly, composed in the main of the conservative bourgeoisie, voted to maintain a constitutional monarchy, and contented themselves with suspending the King until the constitution should be completed. The democrats were greatly dissatisfied. The Cordeliers drew up a petition that declared the decree of the National Assembly contrary to the wishes of the Sovereign People and therefore void, demanded the punishment of the guilty King and the appointment of a new executive. They carried the petition, with blanks for signatures, to the Champ-de-Mars, laid it on the altar of *la Patrie* for everyone that could to sign on the morrow. Early the next day, July 17, 1791, two men were found at the altar under suspicious circumstances. The rabble took them for spies and murdered them. Disturbance was afoot. The municipal government proclaimed martial law, and Bailly and La Fayette at the head of the National Guard proceeded to the Champ-de-Mars and read the riot act; they were greeted with volleys of stones and some shots. A soldier beside Bailly was wounded. The Guard fired back, killing and wounding a number of persons. The radicals raised a

fearful outcry, and dubbed the affair a massacre. Marat, in *l'Ami du Peuple*, foamed at the mouth. Enforcing the law was an abomination to him. But for the moment the moderates prevailed. Marat's printing press was smashed, Camille Desmoulin's paper stopped, Danton fled to England. But blood had been shed between class and class; it foreboded a struggle *à outrance*. The majority in the National Assembly took advantage of their temporary victory to go further; they strengthened the royal power, they diminished popular rights by increasing the property qualifications for electors, they placed some restrictions on the liberty of the press, and enacted other provisions that tended to give the upper classes more power at the expense of the lower. It was a blow at democracy, and democracy bided its time to hit back. With this the *Assemblée Constituante*, as it is called, completed the constitution; it had fulfilled the oath taken at the Jeu de Paume two years before. The King, though hesitant and vacillating as usual, accepted it (September 14, 1791). The Assembly, therefore, *functus officio*, disbanded, having first passed a foolish self-denying ordinance that none of its members should be eligible to the new legislature — *l'Assemblée Législative* — provided for by the new constitution.

In the *Assemblée Législative*, the Right, the moderate men, believing in class and upper-class privileges, wished to carry on the policy of the *Assemblée Constituante* and maintain the King's prerogatives; they are called the Feuillants, from the name of the comparatively conservative club to which they belonged. On the left, the Jacobins, taking their name from their club, wished to reduce the royal power to nothing; they were democrats to the bone, had much to say about the Sovereign People, about liberty and equality, they condemned what they stigma-

tized as the massacre of the Champ-de-Mars of July 17, and applauded the mutineers of Nancy as patriots and martyrs. As yet the breach that was to come between the milder and the more ferocious Jacobins, between the Girondins, as they are called from the province whence came several noted leaders, and the Montagne (Robespierre, Danton, Collot d'Herbois, and such), had not shown itself, and at this time the Girondins, Brissot, Condorcet, and Vergniaud, were the guiding spirits of the Jacobin party in the Assembly. But for the moment foreign affairs came to the front.

The monarchs of Austria and Prussia were putting their heads together to see what they could do to reëstablish the *ancien régime* in France, while the comte d'Artois, with 20,000 émigrés, was encamped across the border near Coblenz waiting for a favorable moment to invade his native land. The nation was trembling in the excitement of newly obtained liberty, of dangers and uncertainties, restless for action, and not lacking in arrogance. The majority wanted war. The Jacobins believed that war would unite the nation in one glorious passion for liberty, equality, and fraternity, while the King thought that the nation, finding itself ill prepared and overmatched, would rally to the monarchy as its only safety, or that, if the invaders won, they would set him back on his absolute throne. The Feuillant ministry inclined to peace, but they could not withstand the general clamor. A saucy message was sent to the Emperor, demanding to know his intentions. The Emperor denied any intention of interfering with the domestic affairs of France, but was ill advised enough to refer to the Jacobins as a pernicious body.

The Jacobins were prepared to make the most of the phrase. They had been laboring hard to foment the



passions of the populace. They had whispered and shouted and printed and published that there was a vast conspiracy to bring about a counter-revolution, that thirty thousand aristocrats and their abettors were lying in hiding ready to come forth and devour, that the Court was in correspondence with Austria and Prussia, that plots and treachery were thick as autumnal leaves in Vallombrosa. Nobody knew how much was true, but everybody apprehended the worst. Suspicion, distrust, fear, sat beside every man at table by day, and shared his pillow by night. To prepare against the counter-revolution the Jacobins armed the rabble with pikes and clapped red bonnets on their heads. At this juncture a wave of high prices and hunger brought riots and murder. The famished multitudes began to think that the Jacobins were right, that their only safety lay in pikes and red bonnets.

Such being the general state of mind, naturally enough, on the Emperor's insult, a great shriek went up, and within the *Assemblée*, riding high on the flood of popular indignation, the Jacobins ousted the Feuillants from power. As, under the constitution, deputies could not become ministers, the party gave Roland, a most respectable, upright *quaker endimanché*, better known as the husband of the charming, tragic Madame Roland, the portfolio of the interior, and to Dumouriez, a brilliant, untrustworthy soldier of insinuating manners, that of foreign affairs. Dumouriez, spying therein personal advantage, was all for war, and on April 20, 1792, war was declared against Austria.

The declaration of war was greeted with general enthusiasm, and a young officer in the engineer corps, Rouget de Lisle, composed a battle hymn, words and tune :

*Allons! Enfants de la patrie,  
Le jour de gloire est arrivé!*

But the war began badly. On the Belgian frontier the troops ran away at the approach of the enemy, and then to console themselves murdered their general and several prisoners. On receiving the news of the defeat, Robespierre attacked the Girondin ministry, who now exhibit the signs of weakness that always accompany moderation in times of storm and stress. The Girondins, on the one hand, wished to restore discipline in the army and punish the murdering soldiers, and so ran counter to Robespierre and his friends, and that forced them to seek votes from the Feuillants; while on the other hand they wished to take vigorous steps against the counter-revolution, and in such measures they needed the support of the red radicals. The counter-revolution seemed the most dangerous, and the ministry proposed two strong measures: the first, banishment of the nonjuring priests; the second, establishment of a camp of 20,000 soldiers under the walls of Paris. The King vetoed the first measure for conscience' sake, the second for self-preservation. Roland was dismissed; Dumouriez resigned and went to the front. The populace, their passions fanned by Jacobin agitators, declared themselves outraged by this disregard of the wishes of the Sovereign People, and vowed that they would let the Feuillants and the King know it. The faubourgs Saint-Antoine and Saint-Marceau picked up muskets, pikes, bludgeons, and marched through the streets that led to the *Salle de Manège*, the Assembly Hall, on what is now the rue de Rivoli, where, waving a pair of black breeches, emblem of the *sans-culottes*, and a calf's heart, marked *cœur d'aristocrate*, they paid their respects to the craven deputies, and then swept on into the palace of the Tuileries, upstairs into the King's presence, insulted him, tramped on through the Queen's apartments, insulted her, and finally got out and took

their noisy way back to the slums (June 20). Such royal humiliation prophesied worse evils to come.

The constitutionalists rallied about the King, but they were powerless. La Fayette, horrified by the events of June 20, and loyal to the oath he had taken to support constitution and King, left his headquarters at the front, rode to Paris, walked into the Assembly, denounced the Jacobins as rascals and traitors (June 28). It was too late. He then offered his services to the King, but the Queen said better death than to be saved again by La Fayette. So he rode back to the army, sick at heart. Before long he escaped across the border. The Jacobins in the Assembly demanded his impeachment. The motion was lost, but that was the last victory of the moderates.

The news from the front was bad. Everything seemed to be going to pieces. The Assembly proclaimed *la Patrie en danger*. And now (August 1) came the Duke of Brunswick's manifesto, bidding the citizens of Paris beware, for, on the word of an emperor, if any harm should befall King or Queen, he would give the city over to military punishment. Paris went mad. The Sovereign People swore that, if the Assembly would not do its duty, they would do theirs. On August 10 the tocsin rang, the reddest Jacobins gathered together from all the squalid quarters in the east end, faubourg Saint-Antoine on the *rive droite*, faubourg Saint-Marceau on the *rive gauche*, and, joined by five hundred and seventeen men from Marseilles, picked because "they knew how to die," singing Rouget de Lisle's battle hymn, by National Guards turned Jacobin, and by ruffians from everywhere, bore down on the Hôtel de Ville. They ousted the city government and put in a commune of their choosing; they enticed the commander of the royal troops to leave the

Tuileries and confer with them, and massacred him. Then on to the palace. There were nine hundred Switzers and some five hundred French Guards who could be trusted, and others less certain, but there was scant ammunition, at best but three rounds to a man, and for many soldiers only one. The mob attacked. The Swiss fought bravely, but the odds were too great. The King, who had fled to the Assembly for safety, sent orders for them to surrender. Of the mob some three or four hundred were killed or wounded, while all the Switzers were massacred on the spot or executed later. So passed "the glorious combat at the Tuileries of the French People against tyranny," as the commemoration medal expressed it.

The Jacobins were now in the saddle with a vengeance. The King was suspended from his office and locked up in the Temple. The Assembly decreed a new National Convention to revise the constitution, and appointed an executive committee with Danton at its head; while the new insurrectional government of the city of Paris pushed its savage way to become the dominant power in the State. Meanwhile at the front things were going badly. The Prussians were marching on Verdun. Paris answered by a feverish energy of enrolling volunteers. The fiery Danton thundered out his famous: "*Il nous faut de l'audace, encore de l'audace, et toujours de l'audace, et la France est sauvée.*" Robespierre from the Commune bullied the Assembly; and the Sovereign People clamored for punishment of the crimes of August 10 — to wit, the defense of the Tuileries. A *Comité de Surveillance* was appointed, of which Marat became the master spirit. Fear and anger kissed each other. As Carlyle says: "All France leaps distracted, like the winnowed Sahara waltzing in sand colonnades."

At this time there were some twenty-five hundred persons in the various prisons, most of them improvised from former abbeys, as the old prisons were too small — aristocrats, nonjuring priests, Swiss soldiers, suspected persons, and so on. The cries for vengeance rang out louder. Danton (who liked comfort and peculated) believed that the Sovereign People should set the seal of blood between them and the old régime; and Marat, who had been invoking all the devils in Hell to punish persons whom he did not like, made preparations. On September 2, in the Abbaye Saint-Germain, the nonjuring priests were massacred, patriots of the neighborhood acting as gentlemen executioners. But it was thought better to have the business official, and a popular tribunal was appointed. The prisoners were hauled in, condemned, hauled out and slaughtered like pigs, while the patriotic executioners shouted, “*Vive la Patrie!*” At the Carmes, rue de Vaugirard, and at Saint-Firmin, rue Saint-Victor, some two hundred and fifty priests were cut down at the altar or chased and killed. And so on. The *Comité de Surveillance* sent word to all the departments in France to say that *conspirateurs féroces* held in prison had been put to death by the People, an indispensable act of justice, etc. Marat wished to make a clean sweep and do away with the leaders of the Gironde then and there, but Danton interposed. Marat was furious, but Danton dealt so roundly with him that Marat changed his temper. They embraced. The massacres went on. The beautiful princesse de Lamballe was called before the tribunal; she refused to swear hatred to the King and Queen, as “it was not in her heart.” She was dragged out, her throat was cut, her body mutilated in beastly fashion, her head fixed on a pike and paraded under the Queen’s window in the Temple. At the Salpêtrière, a company of prostitutes,



most of them young, were violated and then murdered. At Bicêtre, a house of correction, boys and girls were massacred. In all, about eleven hundred people were put to death. The patriot press declared that "the People's justice had cleansed the Augean stables." It was at this time that the elections took place to the Convention.

The Feuillants were eliminated. The Gironde now constituted the right, and the extreme Jacobins, La Montagne, the left, with Messrs. Facing-both-ways in between. The right depended for its strength on scattered provinces, the left for its on the passionate proletariat of Paris. The differences between the two parties seems to have been less of doctrine than of temperament. Brissot and Condorcet were men of theory, Danton and Robespierre men of intense energy. In the beginning, however, the danger of invasion forced them to act in accord. Verdun surrendered; the Duke of Brunswick marched on and attacked Kellermann at Valmy, a little west of the Argonne (September 20, 1792). There were about 35,000 men on each side, and the total losses scarce exceeded five hundred killed; but the invading coalition had been repulsed by revolutionary France, and the moral effect was prodigious. The Germans retreated across the Rhine. The French moved forward, and, being two to one, gained the victory of Jemmapes (November 6), and overran Belgium to the north and Savoy to the south. The Convention was thrilled by the idea of toppling down tyrants, and declared that "France would give fraternal aid to all peoples that wished to recover their liberty." Soon they were ready to go farther and treat as an enemy any nation that was cold to liberty, equality, and fraternity. They then annexed Belgium and Savoy. Danton and Carnot maintained that the Rhine was France's natural and historic boundary. But the boundary was of less importance

because from then on "Europe was to have neither fortresses nor frontiers."

In the meantime the Convention had had important domestic affairs to attend to. Royalty was speedily abolished, and a new era opened. September 22, 1792, became the first day of the year 1 of the Republic. The dominant question, however, was what to do with the King. The first vote, passed with virtual unanimity, declared Louis Capet guilty of conspiracy against the national safety; the second, passed by nearly three to two, decided that the judgment should not be submitted to ratification by the people; the third, by a handful of votes, decreed the death penalty. The next day, after condemnation, accordingly, January 21, 1793, Louis Capet was driven in a borrowed carriage to the Place de la Révolution (Place de la Concorde) and in the presence of an apparently indifferent multitude was, not without a struggle, forced down in place for the guillotine. The executioner's assistant held up the head. The crowd dipped their handkerchiefs in the royal blood, shouted *Vive la Nation!* and sang the Marseillaise.

Abroad the news was not well received. In London the French ambassador was told to go. But the National Convention was ready to meet a world in arms, and declared war against King George III and the Stadtholder of Holland (February 1, 1793), and a month later against Spain. Within, la Vendée, the coast district south of Brittany, burst out into insurrection — not from love of the old régime, but from the peasants' devotion to the nonjuring priests and indignation at the King's death. Stofflet, Cathelineau, Elbée, and others took command. Young Henri de La Rochejaquelein gave his life in as pure patriotism as the boy Bara or any of the Jacobins. To add to this, Dumouriez was beaten at Neerwinden

(March 18), and the French were driven out of their new conquests back into France, with the allies at their heels.

In Paris, too, things were not well. Food was scarce, prices high. Cries of betrayal and treachery and treason went up on all sides. But Danton infused his boundless energy into the Convention. The *Comité de Salut Public* was organized. Then came suspicion of Dumouriez, and confirmation; he fled to the enemy, and, whether Danton had been in some understanding with Dumouriez and wished to deny it in the most forcible manner, or what else the cause, he now went over wholly to the Montagne, and denounced domestic enemies. "Show yourselves terrible," he cried. They heeded him. But setting aside the sanguinary, self-seeking or ambitious leaders, nothing in all the pageant of French history is more splendid than the passion of the people *poussant des canons en acclamant la liberté aux jours révolutionnaires, ou s'engageant, en volontaires, à servir, sans souliers, sous le drapeau tricolore, la patrie en danger*. It is often said by historians that the resolute ferocity of a small group of men saved France, but it is interesting to note that Napoleon told La Fayette that, if the early leaders of the Revolution had not been proscribed and the early principles discarded, the doctrines of the Declaration of Rights would have prevailed throughout Europe within ten years. As it was, terror brought longing for peace and safety and opened the door to military despotism, which in its turn brought Wellington and Blücher into Paris and finally set the Bourbons back on their throne.

## XXX

### THE TERROR

THE Mountain believed that, in order to rouse the country to an effort of energy sufficient to put down insurrection at home and repel invaders, it was first of all necessary to get rid of the Girondins; moreover, they were pure democrats, whereas the Girondins represented the comfortable classes. The Girondins must go. As the Gironde, however, still had a majority in the Convention, Paris must overawe that majority into helplessness. On what ground? Dumouriez's treachery supplied the necessary excuse. He had been one of the Gironde, and no doubt he had confederates among them. Robespierre opened the attack. He launched an accusation against conspirators. "There are but two parties," he said, "the corrupt men and the good men." And the Jacobin Club, of which Marat was then president, called on all their fellow citizens to rise in arms and imprison all enemies of the Republic. No quarter to conspirators! The city responded by the election of a Revolutionary Committee, and declared a state of insurrection. The bells were rung and the city gates shut. The Sovereign People was up and doing. That same afternoon thousands of manifestants surrounded the Tuileries, which the Convention was occupying, and demanded a decree of accusation against a score of members of the Gironde; also bread at three cents a pound, and so on. The Convention was slow. The next day *sans-culotte* soldiers — artillery, horse, and foot — surrounded the Convention again. The Revolutionary Committee walked in; its spokesman

read his warning: "The torch of liberty is burning dim, the pillars of equality totter, the counter-revolutionists lift their heads! But the thunderbolt is ready! Decree the accusation."

So it was done; twenty-nine deputies and two ministers of the Gironde were arrested (June 2). The Mountain took command and went to work with a will. Two new members of patriotic fame were added to the *Comité de Salut Public*, Couthon and Saint-Just, partisans of Robespierre (July 10), but, for the moment, Marat seemed to embody the spirit of ferocity and blood. On July 13 a beautiful young woman went to Marat's lodgings. She carried a petition to deliver to him personally. Marat, troubled by some disease for which a hot bath was an alleviation, was seated in his tub, wrapped in a sheet, with a board across to write upon. She was allowed to come up, and as he was noting down the facts that she communicated she drew a dagger and stabbed him to the heart. In the Musée des Archives, once the Hôtel Soubise, in tragic contrast to the gay decorations upon the walls and ceilings, pictures by Boucher, carvings and stucco, you will see in a case the farewell letter of Charlotte Corday to her father just before her trial. There was no hope, the condemnation must be a mere formality, but she sought to comfort him, *la cause était si belle*.

The Mountain rolled up their sleeves. They added proscription to proscription, they sent Marie-Antoinette to the tribunal of death, they ordered the tombs and statues at Saint-Denis destroyed, the arrest of strangers, the outlawry of every Frenchman who had invested in foreign funds, and laid heavy penalties on anybody who refused to accept an *assignat*. Let us not forget that the Convention also enacted much beneficent legislation; they devised a system of public instruction, they granted



author's copyright, they adopted the metric system, they considered a civil code, and so forth. The energy displayed was prodigious. La Vendée at home; abroad, Austria, Prussia, Holland, Naples, and England! All were met with courage, vigor, and capacity. The British government roused particular fury by its *conduite lâche, perfide et atroce*; Pitt was declared an enemy of the human race. Conscription was voted, and the army increased to more than a million men. Unsuccessful generals were suspected and guillotined. But all done and said, the Reign of Terror is their best-remembered achievement. On August 30, in the Jacobin Club, Robespierre said: "The people demand vengeance. It is a just demand; the law must not deny it." In the Convention one of his henchmen moved, "*Qu'on place la Terreur à l'ordre du jour.*" So far but a few score persons had been guillotined. Too few. The tribunal was increased, and the public prosecutor, Fouquier-Tinville, given assistants. Everybody that any patriot could suspect was arrested. There was no preliminary interrogation, no witnesses except when such a "formality" seemed likely to discover other guilty persons, and no counsel. By December the number of persons in prison had increased from 1310 to 4133. In October Marie-Antoinette was beheaded; after her, Barnave, Bailly, Brissot, Vergniaud and other Girondins, Philippe-Égalité, Madame Roland, Madame du Barry, André Chénier, the poet — strange bedfellows in the grave.

In the meantime the armies of the east, under Hoche, Pichegru, and Desaix, had saved the frontier, and in the south the English had been driven from Toulon, after some fighting in which a young artillery officer from Corsica distinguished himself. But release from fear of foreign invasion did not calm the patriots. Robespierre,

the incorruptible, declared: "We want an order of things in which all base and cruel passions are chained up and all generous, beneficent passions are quickened and encouraged by the law." The instruments of virtue, thus erected into a system, were the *Comité de Salut Public* and the *Comité de Sûreté Générale*, composed of a dozen members each; the Convention sat, but did little more than serve as the frame for these two committees. Jealousies arose and groups took shape; it became clear that one world was not large enough to hold them all. Robespierre declared that there were two factions who were serving the enemy — those that were too violent, and those that were not violent enough; the first were damnable because they denounced the defenders of the people, the second because they wished to spare wrongdoers. Only an incorruptible Robespierre, and most exact followers, could tread the path of golden mean. He struck his first blow at the too violent; Hébert, Anacharsis Cloots, and some fifteen others went to the guillotine (March 24, 1794). Then he turned upon the second group, and brought charges of slandering the Convention, of corruption, of conspiracy to reëstablish the monarchy, and so forth. Danton, Camille Desmoulins, and the rest of them wended their way in tumbrels to the Place de la Révolution (April 4, 1794). Then a conspiracy was discovered in the prisons and Lucille Desmoulins, Camille's charming wife, and another batch were executed. Fouquier-Tinville noted that heads fell like tiles from a roof during a storm. From June 10 to July 27 (9th Thermidor) the figures ran up to thirty a day. All told, about 2627 were guillotined in Paris, some 16,000 to 18,000 in the provinces. In the Vendée, Hell was let loose; the dead have been estimated at from 200,000 to 500,000.

Robespierre was now dictator. His abilities, his sus-

piciousness, his incorruptibility, his rigid private life, his gift of oratory, his belief in the new era of fraternity and innocence, his astute dexterity in political intrigue, won him his place. His mind seems to have beheld visions of green fields and gentle rivulets on the further side of the corruption that must be guillotined out of the world. The old era was to be wiped out; the new months Vendémiaire, Brumaire, Frimaire, Messidor, Thermidor, Fructidor, were to make men forget the sins of old Januarys, the crimes of past Decembers, etc. The poet Fabre d'Églantine furnished the names, not long before he went to the guillotine with Danton. The spirit of fraternity — very strong in Robespierre — abolished the *monsieur* and *madame* that savored of class distinction, and *citoyens* greeted, or guillotined, *citoyens* or *citoyennes*, as the case might be. At his instigation, by decree of the Convention "the French People recognized the existence of God and the immortality of the soul." But the superstitious Sunday was banished. A week should consist of ten days, and each be heralded by a fête in honor of the Benefactors of Humanity, of Industry, of Public and Private Virtues, of Agriculture, of Forefathers, and so on. Notre-Dame became a Temple of Reason; Hébert ordered the row of tyrannical kings in the façade to be smashed. While Robespierre was discoursing on such matters, Boissy d'Anglas thought he "was listening to Orpheus teaching men the first principles of civilization and ethics." His great day of triumph was the 20th Prairial (June 8, 1796). On that day, as president of the Convention, he presided over a fête in honor of the Supreme Being held in the Tuileries garden, where, after an invocation, in the presence of a tricolored multitude, he set fire to an image of Atheism, attended by Ambition, Egotism, and Discord. Thence an excellent procession carrying flowers, fruits,

sheaves of wheat, garlands, and so forth proceeded to the Champ-de-Mars, where there was an artificial mountain crowned by a liberty tree.

But Robespierre's position was not founded on a rock. The *Comité de Sûreté Générale* and *Comité de Salut Public* were not on good terms; in the former were Billaud-Varenne, Collot d'Herbois, and Carnot, in the latter Robespierre, Saint-Just, and Couthon. There was a terrible scene in the Convention. Billaud-Varenne shouted out: "The choice lies between Robespierre's death and ours." Robespierre tried to reply. Cries of "Down with the tyrant!" smothered his voice, while other members shouted, "Danton's blood chokes him." A decree of accusation was passed. But the city government was in the hands of Robespierre's friends; it attempted an insurrection. It was now the Convention against the Commune. Robespierre and his adherents gathered in the hall of the Hôtel de Ville. It was the 9th Thermidor (July 27), and late in the evening; people were coming out of the theatres. Some members of the Convention burst into the hall. Shouts, blows, shots, Robespierre's jaw was broken; but whether by the intruders or by an attempt at suicide, no one knows. His brother fell or was thrown out of the window. Couthon, a cripple unable to go about except in a wheeled chair, was rolled downstairs. That afternoon (July 28) Robespierre and twenty-one others were guillotined; the next day seventy of their partisans. But the Terror was over. Official use of the word "revolutionary" was forbidden. The buildings in which the Jacobin Club used to meet were pulled down. You can see the Marché Saint-Honoré on the site. There were disturbances, last convulsionary attempts by the Jacobins to reassert themselves, but they were crushed both in Paris and, somewhat roughly, in the provinces, —

an eye for an eye, — and in the end quiet prevailed, old ways came back, churches were opened. Marat's ashes, for which Mirabeau's had been cast forth from the Panthéon, were in their turn dug up and flung out. So ended the great figures of those fiery days — Marat, Danton, Camille Desmoulins, Robespierre, and the rest.



## XXXI

### THE NAPOLEONIC EPIC

THE Convention, as I have said, accomplished a remarkable amount of excellent legislation. It reorganized public education, putting at the top of the system the Institut, with its five academies — the Académie Française, and its fellows, *des inscriptions et belles-lettres*, *des sciences morales et politiques*, *des sciences*, *des beaux-arts*. The government it provided consisted of a legislature of two houses, with an executive of five members, the Directory. This constitution is known as that of *an III* (1795). The legislature was to be composed of seven hundred and fifty members, of whom one third were to be elected annually — that is, out of the seven hundred and fifty for the first year five hundred members of the Convention would remain. But for one reason and another there was great dissatisfaction with the Convention, and this provision for keeping themselves in office excited widespread indignation. All sorts of persons — royalists in the main, émigrés, chouans, Jacobins, malcontents — threatened insurrection. The government ordered up troops, and appointed Barras commander-in-chief. Under Barras was a cavalry officer, Joachim Murat, and a young brigadier-general, Bonaparte, who had lately resigned his post and was about to go to Turkey to reorganize the Sultan's artillery. At Sablons, twenty miles from Paris, there were forty cannon, the possession of which perhaps would determine to which side victory should incline. Murat with three hundred horse arrived first and fetched the cannon to defend the Convention. Nevertheless, not

discouraged, on October 5, 1795, the 13th Vendémiaire, an IV, the insurrectionalists were up and assembling bright and early; but they found the rue Saint-Honoré guarded from the Place de la Révolution to the Palais-Royal, and the *rive gauche* from the Pont de la Révolution to the Port-Royal. That afternoon fighting began. It was ended by "the whiff of grapeshot" (Carlyle). The façade of Saint-Roch still bears the marks of bullets. The insurrection was crushed. The main advantage fell to young Bonaparte, acclaimed "General-in-Chief of the Army of the Interior." The Place de la Révolution became Place de la Concorde, and on October 26, 1795, the Convention held its last session.

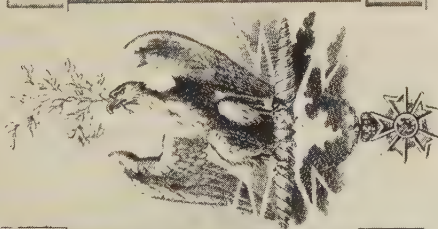
The Directory assumed the government, and set out *faire regner la concorde, ramener la paix, régénérer les mœurs*, etc. Barras, a ci-devant noble, elegant, handsome, dissolute, and Carnot, the "organizer of victory," are the two best remembered. The war at the front went well enough, and the civil war was ended (1796). Life was again gay for the well-to-do; they danced, flirted, and sauntered about; but the poor were still very miserable. Babeuf, socialist and at last communist, — "*Les fruits de la terre sont à tous, et la terre à personne*," — stands out as an indication of the general want. He formed a conspiracy, and was guillotined (1797). But the new planet swimming in the sky must take all our attention. Bonaparte was named General-in-Chief of the Army of Italy (1796); he married Josephine Beauharnais, and crossed the Alps, "to tear (as Lord Rosebery says) the heart out of glory." Augereau and Masséna served under him. "*Soldats! Vous vous êtes précipités comme un torrent du haut de l'Apennin; vous avez culbuté, dispersé, éparpillé tout ce qui s'opposait à votre marche*" (May 1796). Piedmont, Milan, Venice, the poor old Pope, were battered or scared into

submission. In 1797 he began a march toward Vienna; when he had crossed the Alps and had come within striking distance, Austria accepted his terms (April). But in Paris matters were not advancing so well. The royalists were looking up, and thought they spied their chance. A so-called Anglo-royalist plot was formed to overthrow the Directory and proclaim, so it was said, the late King's brother, Monsieur, as Louis XVIII. Two of the directors, Carnot and Barthélemy, and a majority of the members of the lower house were party to the plot. The others, Barras among them, asked the army for help. Bonaparte sent Augereau to Paris. On September 4 the soldiers entered the city. Barras and his friends arrested Barthélemy, and condemned fifty-three members of the legislature to exile. Carnot escaped. Liberty of the press was suspended, and laws favorable to the royalists were repealed. This is known as the *coup d'État* of the 18th Fructidor. Bonaparte and the army were now in power. He returned to Paris in triumph.

In May 1798, Bonaparte, his head on fire with imaginings, set out to conquer Egypt. He captured Alexandria and Cairo, and defeated the Mamelukes in the battle of the Pyramids: "*Soldats, du haut de ces Pyramides quarante siècles vous contemplent.*" But Nelson destroyed his fleet at Aboukir (August 1). Bonaparte, cut off from France, dreamed of Alexander the Great and India. He took Gaza and Jaffa, but was foiled before Acre. He made his way back to Egypt, won the land battle of Aboukir (July 24, 1799), and learned from English gazettes how matters were going elsewhere in the world. Except for Spain, France was in arms against all Europe, and the fighting had been going against her. Almost all her old conquests were lost. She was driven from Italy and from most of Switzerland. The Dutch fleet had joined Eng-



*Portrait*



*Napoleon*

# NAPOLEON

*From an engraving by Wedgwood*





land, Admiral Jervis had destroyed the Spanish fleet off Cape St. Vincent, and the English had captured Minorca. Bonaparte knew that his own fortunes required him to get to Paris. He slipped away privily, evaded the British frigates, and reached Paris in October (1799). Fortune had already turned, and successes had relieved the national feeling, but nothing shone bright enough to rival Bonaparte's glory.

He was right. He had reached Paris in a happy hour. The Directory had been making a mess of things, and its position was critical. Sieyès and one other of the directors headed an opposition to the majority of their colleagues, and Bonaparte's brother Lucien stirred up the legislature against them. Bonaparte, who was received in the city with the greatest enthusiasm, entered into their conspiracy. These were the most critical days in his upward career. By a trick the legislature was induced to move out to Saint-Cloud. Bonaparte followed with a strong force of soldiers, in order (the proclamation said) to protect them. You find Lannes, Murat, Lefebvre, and Marmont with him. His fate hung in the balance. The upper house was favorable to him, but the lower house took an oath to support the constitution. Bonaparte walked in among them. There was an explosion of indignation: "Down with the Dictator!" "*Hors la loi!*" Pushed about rudely, he walked away without saying a word, uncertain and troubled; Lucien, president of the Assembly, followed him. What would the soldiers do? Lucien, with his orator's art, addressed them: "*Citoyens soldats!* The President of the Council declares to you that an immense majority are in a state of terror; some of the representatives have drawn stilettos and threaten them with death. . . . Audacious brigands, no doubt in England's pay," etc. etc. The soldiers shouted, "*Vive le*

*Général!*” marched in and cleared the hall (November 9, 1799). The deed was done. The Directory was suppressed, and in its stead three consuls were appointed — Bonaparte, Sieyès, and Roger Ducos. Sieyès drew up a new constitution, under which Bonaparte became First Consul, with virtually the whole executive power in his hands (December 1799). Such was the *coup d’État du dix-huit brumaire*.

The First Consul made some shadowy proposals of peace to Vienna and London. No notice was taken of them. He took command of the army of Italy, crossed the Alps (May 1800), and won the battle of Marengo (June 14). This victory acted like a rocket that sets off a dozen. Moreau, aided by Ney and Grouchy, won the battle of Hohenlinden (December). Dupont, Brune, Macdonald, and Murat (who had married Bonaparte’s sister Caroline) swept on through Italy. Both Austria and England were ready to parley. The treaty of Lunéville was made with Austria (February 1801), and in October preliminaries for the Peace of Amiens with England were signed, and France, happy in peace after the years of war, by a plebiscite, 3,568,885 against 8374, elected Napoleon Bonaparte Consul for life (July 1802).

Bonaparte gave to France a stable government, went with a will to the work of reconstruction, and set the stamp of his genius upon it. He restored the Church by a concordat with the Pope, and so took away what had been the chief cause of the civil war; he organized the judicial system and caused the Code Napoléon to be composed and enacted; he established a system of local government, the Bank of France, the Legion of Honor, and the University, “which is the whole teaching profession formed into a corporation and endowed by the State, a kind of church of education.” He was a mighty intellectual

engine, and collected about him the ablest men in France and breathed his energy into them. But these institutions, which have long outlasted his empire, can be but part of the background in a short history like this.

In the political sphere, Napoleon turned the republic into a monarchy. Popular liberty had not proved a success; it had led to bankruptcy, civil war, virtual barbarism. The alternative was monarchy; and monarchy could mean nothing but Bonaparte. Republicans and Jacobins on the one hand and royalists and chouans on the other were bitter. There were plots and rumors of plots. These were tracked to earth by Fouché, head of the police. Condemnations, executions, transportations, and arrests were frequent enough. The English were believed to be at the bottom of these plots. Conspiracy of some sort spread pretty far; General Pichegru was involved, and General Moreau; the Bourbons were suspected of having a hand in it. Bonaparte thought it would be well to show the country that first or last it must choose between the Bourbons and himself, and also that it would be well to let the Bourbons know that he was ready to strike, and strike hard. A prince of the blood, the duc d'Enghien, was residing across the border in Baden. He had fought against the French Republic, he had been in English pay, but he seems to have had nothing to do with any plots against Bonaparte. He was kidnapped, brought to Paris, and shot. Fouché, according to report, said, "*C'est pis qu'un crime; c'est une faute.*"

But Bonaparte used the plots and rumors dextrously. A stable government should have some firmer guaranty of permanence than a consulship. He had already been elected Consul for life; but what might happen on his death? Might there not be danger of a new Reign of Terror? How about the principle of heredity? So

Napoleon became Emperor, and the imperial dignity was declared hereditary in his family (May 18, 1804). This decree of the Senate was afterwards confirmed by a plebiscite. The next day he named fourteen marshals, some of whose names are household words—Berthier, Masséna, Augereau, Jourdan, Bernadotte, Murat, Soult, Lannes, Ney, Davout. In July he distributed stars of the Legion of Honor. In December, at Notre-Dame, in the presence of the Pope,—everybody knows David's great picture of the coronation in the Louvre,—he put the crown imperial on his own head, and then he crowned Josephine kneeling before him. He seemed a god: "*Je suis appelé à changer la face du monde.*" His epic belongs to the history of Europe. Napoleon, England, the Czar of Russia—these are the great protagonists; Spain, Portugal, Italy, Belgium, Holland, Switzerland, Germany, Prussia, Austria, Denmark, crowd upon the stage merely to be cut and slashed in "the fell incensed pass of mighty opposites." Had it not been for the sea power of England, Napoleon would have held all Europe in his hand.

On the renewal of war, Russia, Austria, and England made a coalition. Nelson destroyed the French and Spanish fleets at Trafalgar (October 21, 1805), and the proposed invasion of England dissolved into air; but Napoleon beat Austria to her knees at Ulm (October 17-19), and Murat entered Vienna. Prussia joined the allies. Napoleon won a great victory over Russia and the remnant of the Austrian army at Austerlitz (December 2). Austria and Prussia made peace. The Holy Roman Empire, which had existed for a thousand years, ceased to be, and Napoleon assumed a protectorate over the Confederation of the Rhine; Joseph Bonaparte became king of the Two Sicilies, and Louis Bonaparte king of Holland. Prussia

faced about and joined Russia and England, only to be crushed at Jena and Auerstädt (October 14, 1806). Everything is kaleidoscopic. Napoleon next defeated Russia at Friedland (June 1807), and came to terms with the Czar in the Peace of Tilsit, where the two sovereigns portioned a great part of Prussia and combined against England's tyranny of the sea. Jérôme Bonaparte received the kingdom of Westphalia; Murat was made a Grand Duke de Berg, somewhere in Germany; Berthier became sovereign prince of Neufchâtel, Bernadotte of Pontecorvo, Talleyrand of Benevento. A Napoleonic *noblesse* was created — thirty-one dukes, besides counts and barons. Dictator of the Continent, Napoleon forbade it to permit any commerce with England.

But the wild dance could not stop. The French invaded Portugal; and the Portuguese royal family sailed for Brazil. In 1808 Napoleon forced the Spanish king and his son Ferdinand to renounce their rights to the Spanish throne, and he sat his brother Joseph upon it. This was a mad act. Wellington went to Spain, and Napoleon had a dangerous enemy at his back. Europe began to writhe. Stein and Scharnhorst preached revolt in Prussia. Andreas Hofer roused the Tyrol. Austria appeared again in the field, but after Wagram (July 6, 1809) again made peace. Josephine, the childless wife, was divorced, and Napoleon married the Emperor's daughter Marie-Louise (1810). The next year the poor little king of Rome, *l'aiglon*, was born. Then the wings of Victory began to moult. Napoleon declared war against Russia (June 22, 1812), and *La Grande Armée* — Frenchmen, Italians, Germans, soldiers of all the dependent kingdoms — marched on that fatal campaign. He pushed the Russian army back at Borodino (September 7), and entered Moscow (September 14). The Russians set fire to the



city. On October 19 the inevitable retreat began. Hungry, frozen, pursued by Cossacks, 300,000 lost, hardly a remnant escaped. The defeat of Leipzig followed (October 16-19, 1813), and then the allies invaded France — Russia, Prussia, Austria, England. Napoleon abdicated on April 11, 1814, and was banished to Elba.

The Bourbons came back, having learned little. Louis XVIII was a very fat man, intelligent, sensible, but with few ideas, no passions, and a high conception of his dignity and of etiquette. He granted a constitution called the Charter, which established a Chamber of Peers, to be appointed by the King, and a Chamber of Deputies, to be elected by a very limited suffrage. Nobody was greatly pleased, and the extreme royalists were greatly discontented. But it was not long before the discussion of both internal and foreign affairs was cut short. On March 1, 1815, Napoleon landed on French soil; he advanced towards Grenoble, where in a narrow defile General Marchand barred his way with six regiments. The 5th of the line raised their muskets to fire. Napoleon walked up alone. "If there is a soldier among you that wishes to kill his Emperor, let him do it." The men threw down their guns. Peasants and soldiers rallied to him. "The imperial eagles flew from steeple to steeple." Marshal Ney, in the royal service, was ordered to arrest him. "Yes," said Ney, "he should be brought to Paris in an iron cage"; but when he approached, his soldiers would not obey him, and willy-nilly he led them to join the Emperor. He said, "*Je vous aime, sire, mais la patrie avant tout.*" "*C'est l'amour de la patrie qui me ramène en France,*" Napoleon replied. Louis XVIII left the Tuileries on March 19; Napoleon entered it on the twentieth.

So the Hundred Days began. Napoleon issued a constitution, and went to take command of the army. The

Powers proclaimed that he had put himself under the ban of civilization, and Russian, Prussian, Austrian, Dutch, and English troops started back to France. The fighting lasted but four days — Quatre-Bras, Ligny, Waterloo (June 15-18, 1815). Napoleon hurried back to Paris, hoping to organize resistance. "If I were dictator," he thought, "I might still win." The Chamber of Deputies opposed. Old La Fayette was a member. They demanded abdication. Needs must. He abdicated, thought of going to America, renounced the idea, and went aboard H. M. S. Bellerophon. "I come," he wrote to the Prince Regent, "like Themistocles to sit by the fireside of the British people. I put myself under the protection of its laws, which I ask of Your Highness as the most powerful, the most steadfast, and the most generous of my enemies." This petition was not heeded. Napoleon was confined on the island of Saint Helena, where, subjected to the mean and vulgar supervision of Sir Henry Hudson, he passed the last years of his life. He died in 1821. His ashes were brought to Paris in 1840 and laid in the sarcophagus in the Dôme des Invalides, "*au milieu de ce peuple français que j'ai tant aimé.*"

## XXXII

### FROM LOUIS XVIII TO LOUIS NAPOLEON

LOUIS XVIII was not violently reactionary, but the royalists who surrounded him were, and the sovereigns of Russia, Prussia, and Austria, *conformément aux paroles des Saintes-Écritures*, with Metternich to advise them, were rigorously intolerant. The *haute bourgeoisie* controlled the legislature, but they were moderate enough until the murder of the duc de Berry, son to the comte d'Artois. This crime frightened the people and enabled the extreme conservatives to take the reins of power. Repressive measures stirred up the old Revolutionists, chief among them La Fayette, also the Bonapartists, to vain conspiracies of all sorts. Outside the kingdom the conflict between liberals and reactionaries was sharper still. In Naples and in Spain there were open revolts against the bigoted Bourbon rulers. The Holy Alliance shivered with annoyance. How rude of those people ! Louis XVIII, who had made common cause with these "champions of order," sent the duc d'Angoulême, son to the comte d'Artois, into Spain with a powerful army, which crushed the liberals and replaced the disgusting Ferdinand VII — Goya's portraits show you what he was, a sneak and a liar — firmly upon his throne (1823).

Louis XVIII died the next year, and his stupid, ignorant bigot of a brother, the comte d'Artois, — who when he fled to England during the Revolution had taken a pair of shoe buckles for each day of the year, — succeeded him as Charles X. His views gave general offense. There were half a dozen years of reaction and growing grievances.

Then the King quarreled with the majority in the House, dismissed a moderate ministry, and appointed in their stead the prince de Polignac, a very battle flag of reaction, and other men in accord with his own views.

The liberals took alarm. The King, they said, threatened the charter. The fourth estate asserted itself. Two journalists in especial, Adolphe Thiers (1797-1877) and Armand Carrel (1800-1836), stepped forward as champions of the liberal cause. The chambers told the King that the ministry did not enjoy their confidence. The King dissolved the House (May 1830) and ordered a new election. In spite of strenuous efforts, the government was beaten. The King was true to his principles, *etiamsi omnes ego non*. He thought the royalists stronger than they were, and expected the brilliant conquest of Algiers to win popular favor. For, after France had submitted for centuries to piracy, an expedition had just before attacked the city of Algiers, captured the city, and hoisted the French flag. Since then Algiers has been a French province. The news reached Paris on July 9. On the twenty-fifth the King issued ordinances that quashed the constitution. The old days of 1789 seemed to roll in from the past. There were hurrying to and fro, — artisans, bourgeois, students, — barricades thrown up, the tricolor hoisted. La Fayette a second time, after forty years, was acclaimed Commander-in-Chief of the National Guard. The King's troops were beaten and withdrawn; the King offered to annul his ordinances. It was too late. He fled to England. Thiers advocated an elected king, the duc d'Orléans, who was quite willing, and promised, "*La charte sera désormais une vérité.*" At the Hôtel de Ville insurrection triumphant debated whether there should be a republic or another king. Old La Fayette was the arbiter; "*ce vieillard indécis est encore*

*le maître de l'heure.*" He remembered the dreadful days of 1792, with Jacobins rampant, the Terror, massacre and civil war, and, taking the duc d'Orléans by the arm, he led him to the window. The crowd shouted, "*Vive La Fayette! Vive le duc d'Orléans!*" Chateaubriand said: "*Le baiser républicain de La Fayette a fait un roi.*" In this fashion the duc d'Orléans, son of Philippe-Égalité, became Louis-Philippe, *roi des Français*.

The reign of Louis-Philippe is not interesting. The ultraliberals and the ultraconservatives and many cross currents of opinion beat against one another. The great banker Laffitte, Casimir-Périer, the duc de Broglie, Maréchal Soult, Adolphe Thiers, Guizot, take their turns at the head of the government. For a year the progressives were in power, and then the conservatives supplanted them and remained in office till the end. The King and his ministers drifted into hopeless unpopularity. Guizot opposed reforms; he was sacrificed, but it was too late. Everybody had grown weary of the old King. The crisis came when the right of meeting was denied. Odilon Barrot, a fervent admirer of La Fayette, led the attack on the government. All unexpectedly, Paris was up in arms. A crowd gathered about the ministry of foreign affairs and pushed against the soldiers, who fired, and some fifty people were killed or wounded. The next day the city rose in wrath. The King abdicated in favor of his grandson. The boy and his mother went to the chamber of deputies. Some inclined to receive her, but the disorder was great. Lamartine demanded a provisional government. The doors were broken open and the insurgents rushed in shouting, "*Vive la République.*" So after a thousand years of dramatic existence, after suppression and revival, the French monarchy came to its end (February 24, 1848), blown out by a breath.



A provisional government was formed, of which Lamartine the poet, and Louis Blanc the radical, were members. For political and social reasons the laboring class was taken into account. There had been considerable talk about the condition of the laboring man. Saint-Simon (1760-1825), the founder of French socialism, had advocated an industrial State managed by scientific men, in which captains of industry were to supplant soldiers and nobles, and science should supersede the Church, all in the interest of the poor. Fourier (1772-1837), another socialist writer, developed the idea of association and coöperation in place of competition. The social order must be reconstructed. His scheme was to divide society into phalansteries of 1620 persons each, who should live together and assign work to the members according to their several inclinations, for, according to Fourier's psychology, there are 810 inclinations in a man, 810 also in a woman, and if you choose 1620 people, each representing a dominant inclination, each man and each woman can follow that dominant inclination, and ever after live happy in one harmonious whole. At least so I understand the scheme. Proudhon (1809-1865) was also socialistic. In 1840 he published his book, *Qu'est-ce que la propriété?* To which question he answered, "*La propriété, c'est le vol.*" Louis Blanc (1811-1882) held notions that bordered on communism. He contended that liberty consists in the power of developing one's faculties, and that the State can procure such liberty for all, by organizing labor and providing a job for each man (1839). It is not strange, with these ideas in vogue, and the July revolution resting on the proletariat of Paris, and a mob outside the Hôtel de Ville awaiting their action, that the government guaranteed work to every laborer, and to give effect to their guaranty provided *ateliers sociaux*. Nevertheless, the proletariat of Paris was not

satisfied; there were many manifestations and threatenings. The country at large, however, deemed the employment of all laborers in Paris who were out of work too expensive. Confronted by these conflicting views, the government ordered all workmen from seventeen to twenty-five to enlist in the army, and the rest to be ready to go into the provinces and dig. This plan outraged the proletariat and started an insurrection. General Cavaignac with fifty thousand soldiers fought his way from street to street. The bourgeoisie was again arrayed against the proletariat, and this time prevailed (June 23-25, 1848).

A fresh constitution was drawn up, and an election for president was held. General Cavaignac represented the bourgeoisie and the Revolution of 1848; his opponent was Louis Napoleon (1808-1873), a son of Louis Bonaparte, king of Holland, and Hortense Beauharnais, a daughter of the Empress Josephine. Louis Napoleon's life had been full of adventures. He had lived in exile, and had joined rebels in the Papal States. In 1836, coming to France, he tried to raise a revolt in the garrison at Strasbourg; in 1840, he tried again at Boulogne, and was sentenced to imprisonment at Ham, where during his six years of residence he devoted himself to his own education, studied social questions, and wrote a treatise entitled *The Extinction of Pauperism*—a bait for the public. The name Napoleon proved a magical talisman. He polled near five and a half million votes to Cavaignac's million and a half.

Louis Napoleon had autocratic tastes and believed himself somehow an instrument of Providence; he disliked the bourgeoisie, and was soon at odds with the legislature. In order to be able to get power into his own hands he cultivated the favor of the army, the proletariat, and the peasants. He was immensely successful. By a clever

*coup d'État* he altered the constitution and made himself president for ten years instead of four. A plebiscite (December 1851) ratified his action by a vote of fourteen to one. One further step remained: "*L'Empire, c'est la paix.*" Another plebiscite, of near eight millions to two hundred and fifty thousand votes, reëstablished the imperial throne, and Napoleon III entered the palais des Tuileries. The next year he married a Spanish lady, Eugénie de Montijo. There we will leave them for the present — to amuse themselves with masked balls, banquets, tipping tables, and the rippling gayety of Offenbach's early music — and make a little retrospect.

Such events as France had passed through could not but affect the arts and literature. Fragonard and Clodion could not survive October 5 and 6, 1789. The absolutism of the Convention and of the Empire, and reminiscence of Plutarch, brought back the classic arts, which indeed from the time of Poussin had been obscured rather than forsaken. Louis David (1748-1825) dominates the scene. Quite apart from the deep currents that carry the arts this way or that, one cannot but think that during his formative period in Rome (1775-80, 1783-86) his conception of painting was deeply impressed by Domenichino and the Carracci. His picture "Les Horaces," an immense success (1783), was succeeded by "Socrates Drinking the Hemlock," which according to Sir Joshua Reynolds was "the greatest effort in art since the Sistine Chapel." "Brutus after the Death of His Son" was exhibited in the Salon of 1789; the daughter's hair, unrestrained *à la romaine*, set the fashion for ladies' coiffure. Under the Revolution, David became the official dictator of art. He was a member of the Convention, joined the Mountain, and voted for the King's death. He drove the academy of painting from the Louvre, and helped suppress all the

academies of art. But this did not prevent him from accepting Bonaparte and becoming the official painter under the Empire. On the Restoration he took refuge in Brussels. All visitors to the Louvre know his great "Sacre de Napoléon I," and his classical figures — their pose, their tedious color, their disdain of all the graces of light; but even humble tourists *à travers les âges* linger before his portraits — Monsieur et Madame Sériziat, the unfinished Madame Récamier, and the ugly Madame Van Thieghen and her ugly daughters, painted by other hands, it is said, but under his direction and eye.

His pupils and contemporaries are less interesting. Gérard (1770-1837) painted good portraits: Madame Récamier, Madame Bonaparte, Napoleon's mother, the miniature painter Isabey and his little daughter, and such. Guérin (1774-1833), usually considered a disciple, lacks David's power; it has been well said that his sitters look as if they had been posed by Talma. Baron Gros (1771-1835) is admired for his large pictures, "Pestiférés de Jaffa," a scene in Bonaparte's Syrian campaign, and "Champ de bataille d'Eylau," where Napoleon, attended by his marshals, rides among the dead and dying. These paintings, together with David's "Sacre," are the best pictorial representation of Napoleon's epic. Prud'hon (1758-1823) is an acquired taste, unless one is born French. His countrymen couple him with Correggio and Praxiteles; "*la fine sensualité de l'art Louis XVI s'ennoblit de rêverie romantique.*" In the Louvre, Salle Daru, hang his famous pictures, "La Justice et la Vengeance poursuivant le crime" (1807), "Josephine Seated in a Wood," "Psyche Carried off by the Zephyrs" (1808). French visitors stop in front of them to admire *la morbidesse de la chair, les lignes nonchalantes*, while, to his shame, the unilluminated Philistine passes on.

One indisputable fact about Prud'hon is that he foreshadows the romantic school; the reverie of Josephine, the passion of crime and vengeance, the sentimental sensuality of Psyche, all point to the great movement, born of Revolution. Géricault (1791-1824) led the reaction from *l'école davidienne*. In 1812 he exhibited his "Officier de chasseurs à cheval," two years later "Le Cuirassier blessé," in 1819 "Le Radeau de la Méduse." Here is the real beginning of the romantic school in painting, with its love of life, of nature, of melodrama, of self, of energy, intensity, and passion — a school that seems to have wished to put Byron on canvas in vibrating tones and daring values. Delacroix (1799-1863) followed. His portrait of himself in the Louvre, with its frank, bold, sensitive, well-modeled countenance, wins your interest at once. Gossip whispers that he was the son of Talleyrand. In 1822 he exhibited "Virgil and Dante in Hell," two years later the "Massacre de Scio," a revolutionary picture that flung its glove in tradition's face. "We propose," the new school said, "to make our drawing truer, less academic, the composition less symmetrical, less sterile; gestures richer, and also less declamatory; to get away from classical mythology and take our subjects from everywhere and any time; to preserve the picturesque, the ideal, the beauty that we like best . . . and to return to nature."

There never is a dividing line between schools; there is always twilight. Already Girodet had painted the burial of Chateaubriand's Atala, Baron Gros had painted Napoleon at Eylau on a real battlefield, Prud'hon had plunged Josephine into one of Lamartine's moods of bitter-sweet melancholy; while Delacroix, himself, wrote: "I applaud your love of antiquity; it is the source of everything." But with the "Massacre de Scio" the standard



was raised; Delacroix has been called *le plus fougueux et le plus grand des romantiques*.

In the Salon of 1824, where the "Massacre de Scio" was exhibited, a painter much older than Delacroix, with his religious picture "Le Vœu de Louis XIII" hoisted again the flag of tradition of calm, ideal beauty. Ingres (1780-1867), a disciple of David, is as good a draughtsman as ever was. His drawings, besides their elegance, their precision, their serene sureness, have a charm that his large paintings lack. "The Apotheosis of Homer," and such, — and there are many, — leave one chilly, even Œdipus interrogating the Sphinx, or the young girl carrying a water jug. But look at the portrait of M. Bertin, of M. Cordier, and many another, and then go back to his drawings, and you will hesitate as to which school, the classical or the romantic, you will join. Flandrin (1809-1864) was one of his pupils. Chassériau (1819-1856), a painter gifted with a certain noble simplicity, has qualities that belong to both Ingres and Delacroix.

But the romantic movement expressed itself more freely and fully in literature than in painting. Born of the Revolution, democratic, individualistic, with influences coming in on all sides, — from Rousseau, from Goethe's *Götz von Berlichingen*, from Schiller's *Die Räuber*, from Walter Scott and Lord Byron, — this movement flared up like a tropical plant. Chateaubriand (1768-1848) is rather a precursor than a partisan. *Atala* (1801) is the story of a young Frenchman's love for an Indian girl in the forests of Florida, all — girl, forests, flowers, Indians — bathed in a golden haze of romantic and impossible idealism. The *Génie du christianisme*, an attack on irreligion, was published in 1802. Though he had fought under the émigré princes, he accepted a post under Napoleon, but resigned it on the shooting of the duc

d'Enghien. A lonely soul, wrapped in portentous egotism, he passed from literature to politics. His sensibility, his genius for language, his devotion to art and beauty, make him one of the great figures in French literature. His influence was far-reaching; you will find it in Victor Hugo, and in many another.

After Chateaubriand, writers, poets, men of letters, spring up like dandelions on moist lawns. There are the historians, eminent statesmen as well: Guizot (1787-1874), with his *Histoire de la révolution d'Angleterre*, and *Histoire de la civilisation en Europe et en France*; Thiers, 1797-1877, *Histoire de la Révolution française* and *Histoire du Consulat et de l'Empire*; Thierry (1795-1856), *Histoire de la conquête de l'Angleterre par les Normands*; Tocqueville (1805-1859), *La Démocratie en Amérique* and *L'Ancien Régime et la Révolution*. None of those four can be classed as romantic, but Michelet (1798-1874), with his *Histoire de France* and *Histoire de la Révolution française*, most certainly can. Michelet was a man of genius, with the added charm of idiosyncrasy; for instance, in referring to the year when tobacco was introduced into France, he says, "*Date fatale, le tabac a supprimé le baiser.*" There are the novelists: Benjamin Constant, primarily a statesman, with *Adolphe* (1816), once very famous; Victor Hugo, with *Notre-Dame de Paris* (1831), etc.; Henri Beyle, known as Stendhal (1783-1842), with *Le Rouge et le noir* (1831), *La Chartreuse de Parme* (1839); George Sand (1804-1876), with *Indiana* (1832), *Mauprat* (1837), etc.; Prosper Mérimée (1803-1870), with *Colomba* (1840), *Carmen* (1847), etc.; Balzac (1799-1850), with *La Comédie humaine*, begun in 1829—*Scènes de la vie privée*, *Le Père Goriot*, etc., *Scènes de la vie de province*, *Eugénie Grandet*, etc., *Scènes de la vie parisienne*, *César Birotteau*, etc., and others; Alexandre Dumas (1803-1870), with *Le*

*Comte de Monte-Cristo* (1841-45), *Les Trois Mousquetaires* (1844), etc.; Théophile Gautier (1811-1872), with *Made-moiselle de Maupin* (1835), *Le Capitaine Fracasse*, etc.

But of all this romantic literature the most characteristic is its poetry, and of its poetry the drama, and, in the drama, Victor Hugo. The romantic drama is virtually a defiance of the classical drama; no more rules, none of the old proprieties, away with the unities, no separation of comedy and tragedy, no more *style noble*, no more *mots seigneuriaux*. Hugo is the leader: *Cromwell* (1827), *Hernani* (1830), *Marion Delorme* (1831), *Le Roi s'amuse* (1832), *Ruy Blas* (1838). It is hard to put ourselves into that time, when Mlle. Mars in the part of Doña Sol called forth a storm of hisses by saying to her lover, *Hernani*, "*Vous êtes mon lion, superbe et généreux.*" It is melodrama, most of it, but when one is young *Marion Delorme* touches the heart, and when Sarah Bernhardt acted in *Hernani* the play glowed with an intenser life than that of common men.

In poetry, besides Victor Hugo, *Feuilles d'automne* (1831), *Rayons et ombres* (1840), etc., there is Alfred de Vigny (1797-1863), *Poèmes antiques et modernes*; Lamartine (1790-1869), *Méditations* (1820), *Nouvelles Méditations* (1823), *Jocelyn* (1836); Alfred de Musset (1810-1857) (*un enfant gâté, sensible, égoïste, avide d'être aimé*), *Les Nuits* (1835-1840), and the poetic plays *Les Caprices de Marianne* (1833), and *On ne badine pas avec l'amour*. But enough of this compilation of dates and famous names. The poets' corner in this book is of necessity very diminutive.

To know the period between Waterloo and the Second Empire, the conscientious student will read all that I have enumerated, but if his ambition is narrower and he merely wishes to learn what the bourgeoisie was like during the

reign of Louis-Philippe, he should look at Daumier's 1808-1879) savage caricatures — Daumier was a romantic of the romantics — and make the acquaintance of old Grandet, Madame Marneffe, Cousine Bette, Cousin Pons, Baron Hulot, Vautrin, Rastignac, Bianchon, de Marsay, Maxime de Trailles, *l'illustre* Gaudissart, Père Goriot, César Birotteau, and their fellows.

## XXXIII

### THE SECOND EMPIRE

THE First Empire endured for ten years, the Second for nearly eighteen; but Louis Napoleon's announcement, "*L'Empire, c'est la paix*," proved incorrect. The Crimean War began within eighteen months. Russia, acting upon the theory that Turkey was a "sick man" likely soon to die, and that it would be well to regulate his inheritance, sent an army across the border. England and France made common cause to defend the Turkish possessions. An army of sixty thousand men, two-thirds French, landed in the Crimea, won the battles of Alma (September 20, 1854) and of Inkermann (November 5), and then laid siege to Sebastopol. After a bombardment, the French, led by General MacMahon, stormed the Malakoff tower, and the city fell (September 10, 1855).

In 1859 came the War of Italian Independence. Italy was still a collection of principalities, a "geographical expression" — the kingdom of the Two Sicilies, the Papal States, the kingdom of Piedmont, with Austria in possession of Milan and Venice, and a number of little states. During the perturbations of 1848 (a revolutionary year throughout Europe) the Romans had driven the Pope out of Rome and established a republic under Garibaldi and Mazzini. Louis Napoleon, then President of the French Republic, needed the political support of the Church; so, in a tortuous manner, in order not to offend the liberals more than he could help, cloaking his purpose as craftily as possible, he sent an army to Rome, restored the Pope, and left a French garrison to keep him on his



throne. This action created great anger among both Italian and French republicans. One of these Italian republicans, Orsini, decided to kill Napoleon, partly out of revenge, partly in the hope of causing a revolution both in France and Italy; so he threw an infernal bomb at the Emperor's carriage on its way to the opera. The Emperor was not touched, but eight persons were killed and one hundred and forty wounded. Orsini, sentenced to death, wrote an appeal begging, not for life, but that the Emperor would deliver Italy from Austria and receive the benedictions of twenty-five million people. Profoundly moved by this letter, and also afraid lest other Italian patriots might follow Orsini's precedent, Napoleon decided to interfere in Italy, and concocted plans with Cavour, the prime minister of Piedmont. War accordingly was declared against Austria in May 1859. On June 4 the battle of Magenta was won, that of Solferino on June 24, and Lombardy was free. All the world expected the allies to march on and drive the Austrians from Venice. Then Napoleon heard that a Prussian army was gathering at the Rhine. He knew that the French border on the northeast was ill protected, he was also disappointed not to receive an enthusiastic welcome from the Italian population, and he was not well prepared to attack Mantua and other fortresses of the Austrian Quadrilateral; besides, his staff was tired out, and he disliked to see dead and dying men; so of a sudden he wrote a friendly note to the Emperor of Austria, Francis Joseph, and made peace, on terms that included the cession of Lombardy to Victor Emmanuel. France was paid for her assistance by the cession of Nice and Savoy — a cession that was ratified by a plebiscite in the ceded places. So ended, ignominiously from the Italian point of view, Napoleon's promise to chase Austria from Italy.

These two wars had been, if not really of much advantage to France, at least victorious. In other matters Napoleon's foreign policy, except for minor expeditions in China and Syria, was a series of failures. During the Civil War in America he inclined towards the South, partly from an economic interest in the cotton crop, partly because the Court thought that the Southern planters were socially superior to "pork-selling Yankees," and also because he did not wish an English-speaking Protestant nation completely to dominate America. He asked England and Russia to join in using their influence for an armistice; England held off, and Russia refused. He then offered mediation, which the United States flatly rejected. One failure. In Mexico he fared far worse. In that turbulent country there had been a civil war between the liberals, who were very anticlerical, and the conservative party supported by the Church and the great landowners. The liberal party, upheld by the United States, prevailed and was in possession of almost all the country, but the finances had gone to pot and it could not pay debts due from Mexico to France, Spain, and England. Thereupon these three nations sent expeditions to collect their debts. Suffice it to say that Spain and England withdrew, leaving France there alone. A French army took possession of the country. Napoleon's real purpose in interfering was to take advantage of the American Civil War, then pending, to establish a centralized empire, Latin and Catholic, that should counterbalance the Anglo-Saxon Protestant republic of the United States. He offered the crown to Archduke Maximilian, brother to the Emperor Francis Joseph, who was fool enough to accept it. Poor Maximilian arrived in June 1864, only to find difficulties thick as thistles; there were unsubdued liberals both in the north and in the south,

there were conflicts between the Mexican authorities and the French troops, there was a great debt and an empty treasury, and there was a pretty quarrel with the Pope, who upheld the Mexican Church against the lay constitution. But the action of the United States was decisive. As soon as the Civil War was over, our government, with near a million men in arms, notified Napoleon that they could not put up with a foreign monarchical government in Mexico. Needs must; Napoleon withdrew his troops. The Mexicans shot Maximilian.

In Europe, Napoleon made two attempts to intervene on behalf of weaker nations against greater; in both he was discomfited. That part of Poland taken by Russia began to agitate in 1861, in the hope of obtaining a restoration of the Polish monarchy. This agitation was severely repressed. The Poles then burst into insurrection — this time in the hope of making Poland a European question and inducing the Powers to interfere. Prussia would do nothing, for she held a part of Poland; England protested; Austria protested. France had long been the traditional friend of Poland, and Napoleon wrote to the Czar begging him to be clement and to grant reforms. He also proposed a European congress. Nothing was done. Russia put down the insurrection with ruthless rigor (1861–62). France was snubbed. Again, when Prussia, supported by Austria, claimed from Denmark the duchies of Schleswig and Holstein (restored to Denmark by the Treaty of Versailles), England and France talked of interfering; they exchanged notes and made various propositions. Prussia acted; an army went in, and Denmark ceded the duchies (1864). Another snub.

Nor at home did the imperial prestige stand high; elections and the press warned the Emperor that, though the peasants and country people in general clung to the

Napoleonic legend, the educated classes, and most townsfolk, were drifting toward liberal doctrines and republicanism; and, in the chamber of deputies, Adolphe Thiers (deputy 1863), Jules Favre (deputy 1858), and Gambetta (deputy 1869) found great fault with measures and ministers, and with the whole imperial system. But let us leave politics for a while and go back to art and letters.

In painting, a new group of painters, whose youth had been fashioned by the strong influences of romanticism, have come to the front and are now at the height of their powers. But their manner is very different from that of Géricault and Delacroix. Romantic tempestuousness has subsided; art emphasizes sentiment, nature, and such personal adventures of the eye as occur in the forest of Fontainebleau, and in quiet places where quiet people live, abandoning war, shipwreck, Bedouins, and tigers, for scenes of pleasantness and peace. Corot (1796-1875) first came to his own in Italy. Nothing he painted is more charming than the view near Florence, which has been lately acquired by the Louvre. His best-known paintings are landscapes, though his portraits have a peculiar interest, and carry with them the cachet of his delicate personality and tingle connoisseurs with a half-aromatic delight. Everybody knows those fairy landscapes, where enchanted clouds whisper to mystic trees and light becomes a spiritual thing. One must believe that Corot painted only at dawn or dewy eve, when the pale hues of light shine forth in all their virginal modesty and nature's beauty is more a vision than a reality. It is worth knowing that le Père Corot had a disposition that corresponded with his painting. Théodore Rousseau (1812-1867) is identified with the solemn old oaks in the forest of Fontainebleau. Diaz (1809-1876) had perhaps more interest in effects of color than in truth, but his landscapes do not

seem to be losers by it. These three men were all members of the Legion of Honor — a fact I mention out of justice to the government. Dupré (1811-1889), Daubigny (1817-1878), also painted the woods and glades of Fontainebleau, and fields and still waters; Troyon (1810-1865), herds of sleek kine. You will see excellent pictures by these artists in the Collection Cauchard in the Louvre. Then there is the puissant Daumier (1808-1879), who in his lifetime was regarded as a romantic master of caricature raging against the social injustices of his time, but of late has been lifted among the immortals on the walls of the Louvre and is hailed, by those happy amateurs who, like sojourners in Athens of old, spend their time in nothing else but to tell some new thing, as the possessor of all sorts of symbolic qualities. Van Gogh says: "I begin to long for Daumier. There is much pith and stability in him, he is witty and yet full of sentimental passion; sometimes, for instance in 'The Drunkards,' and possibly also in 'The Barricade,' which I do not know, I find a passion which can be compared to the white heat of iron." Many other painters of note must be passed by in silence.

These painters represent the placid side of the subsiding romantic school. The sculptors are more vibrant. David d'Angers (1788-1856) was a lover of the antique, but full of present-day emotions as well. He modeled a great number of French heroes in busts and medallions, the tympanum of the Panthéon (1837), and such. Rude (1784-1855) a native of Dijon, carved the famous group on the Arc de Triomphe, where the Marseillaise, a female Fury, is leading the *enfants de la patrie* to battle. Other sculptures of his you will find in the wing of the Louvre devoted to modern sculpture, in the Salle Rude. Barye (1795-1875) was revolutionary in his modeling of animals — jaguars, panthers, lions, elephants, wonderful and ter-



rible, "burning bright" in their sombre bronze, with their muscles tense, absorbed in the fearful struggle that is the law of brute life.

The romantic influences of the earlier generation, as I have said, lasted on, but the Second Empire is characterized by a reaction from romanticism, and positivism supplants religion, comfort and luxury supplant ethics, and politics social questions. In the arts, the new school is called "naturalism." Painters and writers adopt a scientific, objective attitude towards their subjects. The pioneer in naturalistic painting is Courbet (1819-1877); he was the first French painter, I believe, to paint his complete picture, and not the mere preliminary sketch, from the model. He painted men and women as they are. And to render his picture more lifelike, as in his enormous canvas, "L'Enterrement à Ornans," in the Louvre, he represents the whole scene life-size or larger. But the picture by Courbet that most attracts the wandering Philistine is that in the museum at Montpellier, in which he paints himself a handsome young man of firm figure and face, off for a tramp, with a staff in his hand, a pack on his back, meeting a friend, who is saying, "*Bonjour, Monsieur Courbet.*" But of all painters of the generation, Jean-François Millet (1814-1875) stands out; he paints peasants at their daily tasks, gleanings, reaping, sowing, but while true to life he gives them large Homeric gestures, and makes their actions lordly and their existence a noble thing. Without being told, one might have guessed that as a boy he had read Virgil and the Vulgate, and that when he went to Paris to study he received "vivid impressions" from Mantegna and Michael Angelo.

But the predominant characters of naturalism are exhibited much more strikingly in literature. I can but refer briefly to the most distinguished men, Sainte-Beuve,

Taine, Renan, and Flaubert. Of all literary critics, Sainte-Beuve (1804-1869) stands at the head. They say that he possessed *l'intelligence la plus fine, la plus souple, la plus curieuse*. He wrote other things besides criticism; for instance, *L'Histoire de Port-Royal* (1840-1860), but that is for the more serious-minded who wish to know about Jansenism and the *dix-septième siècle*. A wider public, all who concern themselves even languidly with French literature, must of necessity browse in the *Causeries du Lundi* (1850 and on), the *Premiers Lundis*, and the *Nouveaux Lundis*. These contain his ripest criticism. As early as 1831 the *Revue des Deux Mondes* was founded, and Sainte-Beuve contributed the opening article, but during the twenty years following he grew mature and mellow. The *Lundis* were published in a daily paper, one each Monday. There you will read essays on all the eminent personages of French literature, and on many others who come into French literature but incidentally — as La Fayette, for instance. As you read what he says about Racine, Le Sage, Balzac, or whoever it may be, you feel that you are looking through high-powered spectacles and see clearly what before was but dim and blurred.

The whole atmosphere is rational and materialistic. Auguste Comte died in 1857, but his *Philosophie positive* affected deeply the men who came after him. Claude Bernard, the physiologist, lived till 1878, and it was under the Second Empire that Pasteur (1822-1895) performed the celebrated experiments with hydrophobia, fermentation, and phylloxera, which earned him a plebiscite, I am told, from his fellow countrymen as the greatest of Frenchmen.

Hippolyte Taine (1828-1893) was a philosophic writer who applied his scientific theories to art, literature, and history. There was a time when his formula for the study

of art — *la race, le moment, le milieu* — was all the vogue, and what he says about works of art is still worth reading. He notices that the defect of the Apollo Belvedere is that it is obvious that Apollo has a valet. His *Histoire de la littérature anglaise* (1863) is chiefly interesting as showing what a keen French intelligence enjoys most in English literature. Mrs. Browning, for instance. The eminent English scholar, Professor Child of Harvard, said that it portrayed “a gigantic intellect struggling with an insuperable ignorance of its subject.” *L’Intelligence* (“Mind”) is a pioneer work in psychology. His *Origines de la France Contemporaine* displeases the radicals, but is admirable from his point of view. In many departments of intellectual life his influence was dominant upon his generation. Nevertheless, to the general reader Ernest Renan (1823–1892) is a more attractive personality. He was a Breton peasant, destined for the Church. For a time he studied in the seminary of Saint-Sulpice, but soon forsook theology for oriental languages in the Collège de France. He was a short, fat little man, of pink complexion, his nose was large, *sa bouche fine*, he wore his hair long, — you will see him in Zorn’s etching, — and he was gay and kindly. He traveled in the Holy Land, and became a professor of Hebrew. His *Vie de Jésus* (1863), which regarded Jesus as purely human, excited great wrath in the Christian world, and also established his reputation as an incomparable master of style. From his pen flow grace, sentiment, delicate thoughts, subtle imaginings, all bathed in an irony that would have delighted the Athenians. Then followed other volumes, all admirable, recounting the history of Christianity as far as the death of Marcus Aurelius, and a second series on the Old Testament. Scholarship has gone further since then, no doubt, but no new scholar, nor any man of letters, has found the

pen that wrote those books. His *Souvenirs d'enfance et de jeunesse* show what a delightful person he really was. His skeptical, free intelligence, — "*Le mieux est de ne rien affirmer*," — his limpid clarity, his learning, his delicious irony, made him a figure as important as Taine. The two shared intellectual dominion over the youth of those days when there was still great talk of the antagonism between religion and science. With a new generation a reaction has set in. M. Paul Claudel says: "*Qu'on se rappelle ces tristes années quatre-vingts, l'époque du plein épanouissement de la littérature naturaliste. Jamais le joug de la matière ne parut mieux affermi. Tout ce qui avait un nom dans l'art, dans la science et dans la littérature était irrégulier. . . . Renan régnait.*" And he turns his contemptuous back.

In fiction Gustave Flaubert (1821-1880) established a reputation equal in its way to that of any novelist that ever lived. With a youth passed under the reign of romanticism, he could not come out uninfluenced. In the castle of Chillon, at the age of twenty-four, he saw Byron's name carved on a pillar in the vaults. "*Je me suis abîmé en contemplation devant ces cinq lettres.*" And yet he founded the naturalistic school. *Madame Bovary* (1857) is still an object of idolatry. For this book, as opposed to good morals, Flaubert was prosecuted by a government that wished to show itself sensitive in such matters. *Salammbô* (1862), a story of Carthage, followed, and the *Tentation de Saint Antoine* (1874). Flaubert was a seeker after perfection in literary form, a craftsman of the most scrupulous technique, and according to general repute he attained the object of his search. Thirty years ago he used to be called the *impeccable* novelist. But in his novels is there humor, wit, fancy, compassion for human sorrow, as with Dickens? Is there profound inter-

play of character and far-flung human interest, as in Tolstoi? Is there poetry, as in Hawthorne? Is there any addition to the value of life? These are questions asked by those insensitive to art for art's sake and indifferent to the hard task that banishes self from the work and conforms to the austere sobriety of science. A novel, according to Flaubert, should be such as a perfect machine would compose.

In comedy there is Émile Augier (1820-1889) and Dumas fils (1824-1895). Augier wrote comedy as we understand it, mirthful, laughable. Schoolboys always are, or were, obliged to read *Le Gendre de Monsieur Poirier*; and he is essentially a moralist and condemns what he disapproves of. Dumas fils seems at this distance of much more importance. He, too, is a moralist; but his comedies do not suggest mirth. *La Dame aux camélias* (1852), like La Fayette's tricolor cockade, has made the tour of the world. The loves of Armand Duval and Marguerite Gautier, and her lingering death, call forth everybody's compassion and many people's tears. *Le Demi-Monde* (1855), in which a woman tries to rise again from this equivocal society into the social world of respectability and is prevented by a former lover, rather rasps one's sympathies.

Poetry follows the same naturalistic road, guided by the signposts of science. Self drops behind the scenes, the object becomes all-important; emotion yields to the intellect. Baudelaire (1821-1867), however, whom I must not pass by, seems to belong to the rear guard, or to the lees, if you prefer, of romanticism. Lanson is hard upon his one little volume, *Les Fleurs du mal* (1857, 1861): "*Il représente à merveille . . . le bas romanticisme, prétentieusement brutal, macabre, immoral, artificiel, pour ahurir le bon bourgeois. Dans cet étalage de choses répu-*



*gnantes . . . je sens beaucoup de pose."* This is true, I think, but I also remember a very lovely lyric, beginning,

*À la très bonne, à la très belle;*

and it is hard to think ill of a poet who asserts,

*Heureux celui qui plane et comprend sans effort  
Le langage des fleurs et des choses muettes.*

Besides, Baudelaire was a great admirer of Poe, and introduced him to his fellow countrymen. Leconte de Lisle (1818-1894) is of quite different clay, and finds his admirers in another camp. His brilliant pictures of striking scenes, such as *Midi*, look like shining metal. He is melancholy-minded, and reviews with a sad eye the religious dreams in which poor humanity has embodied its ideals. His style is cold, hard, brilliant. After Victor Hugo he is the chief, and the young poets whose verses were published in the *Parnasse contemporaine* — the *Parnassiens*, as they are called — so regarded him, and became in a manner his disciples. These poets made a sort of religious cult of art, and framed their verses, as if they were engaged in a religious rite, with exemplary piety. Sully Prudhomme (1839-1907) was a philosopher, and yet not without poignancy. In *Le Bonheur*, Faustus and Stella listen to the nightingale; then she plays on the clavecin:

*Et tu laissas éclore et vibrer sur ta bouche  
L'angoisse qui gonflait ton sein.*

\* \* \* \* \*

*Ton chant s'évanouit comme un baiser qui tremble,  
Et sous tes doigts tendus, arrêtés tous ensemble,  
Expira le dernier accord;  
Et pâle, les yeux clos, la tête renversée,  
Stella, tu répondis tout bas à ma pensée;  
"Après la mort, après la mort."*

But the reader must not take away the impression that this note of sadness characterized Paris. Not so. Baron Haussmann had swept away the old revolution-breeding slums and opened the great avenues that make the city so superb; while, for entertainment, Gounod (1818-1893) composed his great operas, *Faust* (1859), *Mireille* (1864), *Roméo et Juliette* (1867), and, on a far lower plane, Labiche (1815-1888), during twenty years, delighted audiences at the theatre of the Palais-Royal with his farcical comedies — some rather free, as *Le prix Martin*, others most respectable, and chief of all *Le Voyage de M. Perrichon* (1860), which every visitor to Paris has seen at the Comédie Française, — and Offenbach with his brilliant tunes, collaborating with Meilhac and Halévy, geniuses of the libretto, charmed the public by his *opéras bouffes* — *Orphée aux Enfers* (1858), *La Belle Hélène* (1865), *La Grande-Duchesse de Gerolstein* (1867), and so on. Lecocq followed with *La Fille de Madame Angot*. Paris, it is said, was never gayer. Nor did austerity assert itself in the palais des Tuileries, Saint-Cloud, Compiègne, or Fontainebleau, during the Second Empire. The Empress was handsome, but not very intelligent, and liked amusements. The friendly say that these amusements consisted of games, dances, blindman's buff, charades, and other innocent pastimes; the unfriendly talk of orgies, of rowdy songs, and so forth. The Emperor himself is still an enigma. The Austrian ambassador said that he was charming when he wished to be; Queen Victoria, that "he had an unbelievable power of fascination." He seems to have been visionary, with a fatalistic belief in his star, *rusé et naïf*; he was obstinate in his purposes, and yet fundamentally irresolute; and certainly he lacked the art of choosing sagacious counselors. The duc de Morny (1811-1865), a natural son of the Queen Hortense,

and therefore half-brother to the Emperor (to whom also gossip denied Bonaparte blood), was for years his closest adviser, and seems to have been far better at conspiracy than in directing a kingdom; and yet after Morny's death things went far worse than before.

## XXXIV

### THE THIRD REPUBLIC

WE have now reached the fatal year 1870. Prussia, under the guidance of Bismarck's unscrupulous genius, had become the first military Power on the continent. This great man proposed to have a united Germany under Prussian domination. For this it was first necessary to force Austria out of the German Federation. The two nations had nearly come to blows over the Schleswig-Holstein conquest, but Bismarck had not been quite ready; he wished to secure Italy as an ally, and a promise from Napoleon to keep his hands off. Napoleon seems to have entertained a vague idea that he would receive compensation for his acquiescence, by some cession of territory west of the Rhine. Bismarck went ahead. The disagreement between Prussia and Austria intensified into war which lasted but a few days. The battle of Königgrätz was decisive (July 3, 1867). Austria withdrew from German affairs. Prussia annexed Hanover and Hesse-Cassel, formed a Prussian Federation north of the Main, incorporated Schleswig-Holstein, and made friendly treaties with Bavaria and other South German states. Added to this, when it became known throughout Germany that Napoleon had been bargaining for strips of German territory, an angry feeling that the Fatherland was in danger of being robbed created a real national bond among all the German states. In short, Napoleon's diplomacy committed all the errors possible. It was now clear that a struggle with Prussia must come, and Napoleon sought alliances or understandings with Austria

and Italy, but, perhaps because premature old age or physical ailment affected his judgment and his will, he seems to have been content to rest on clouds, and when need came he received no help.

The question of the Spanish crown brought the latent animosities between the two countries to a head. Spain, which had expelled Queen Isabella, a shameless Bourbon, offered its crown to a Hohenzollern prince. France objected to any such political connection between Prussia and Spain, and in Paris especially there was immense excitement over what was thought to be a Prussian intrigue. Émile Ollivier, president of the cabinet, who had wit enough to perceive that German unity would come whether France liked it or not, did not want war, but he was obliged to yield to the fire-eaters, Gramont, minister of foreign affairs, and Lebœuf, minister of war, and under pressure assumed a truculent attitude towards Prussia. The Hohenzollern prince, however, declined the crown, and peace might have been preserved. But the war party was not content; they demanded a guaranty from Prussia that the Hohenzollern candidacy should not be renewed. It is but fair to say that there was some ground for suspecting the renunciation, for this Hohenzollern's brother, who had been chosen king of Roumania, and had apparently acquiesced when forbidden to accept by a European conference, had slipped in disguise to Bucharest, apparently with Bismarck's connivance, and taken the crown, and King William had denied all knowledge of the matter. The French ambassador went to Ems, a watering place, where King William was taking the waters, and insisted upon his point; the King refused politely to give any such guaranty, but said that his cousin (extremely distant) was an honorable man and would not go back on his renunciation. It seemed as if peace would prevail.



Bismarck, who wished for war, as well as the French fire-eaters, also wished Prussia to appear before Europe as the party attacked. Therefore he published an account of this interview between the King and the French ambassador — not falsely, but so pithily as to make it appear that the King had virtually insulted the ambassador. He said long afterwards that he wished the “Ems dispatch” to produce the effect of waving a red flag before the Gallic bull. It did. Much, also, has been said as to the share of responsibility due to the Empress Eugénie — that, being a bigoted Catholic, she hated Protestant Prussia, and also feared that the rising tide of liberalism would endanger the dynasty, and believed victory necessary to secure the crown to her son. At any rate, the Emperor was vacillating, and the Bonapartists were overbearing. In the boulevards the crowd shouted, “*À Berlin!*” At the opera the Marseillaise was sung. On July 19 the legislature, almost unanimously, voted the credits demanded, and France declared war. It seems probable that war, sooner or later, was inevitable; both France and Prussia wished to be cock of the walk.

The French army was badly organized and badly led, transport was defective, stores were missing, regiments found only on paper; while on the German side Moltke’s plans for invasion had been long prepared to the least detail, and the army was ready to execute them. Moreover, the Prussian army was numerically the stronger. Fighting began on August 1 with a trifling French success in a little combat at Sarrebrück; that was Fortune’s last smile. German victory followed German victory, smash upon smash. Melchior de Vogüé, a young soldier in the beaten and retreating army, watched the victorious Germans at bivouac and heard, rising solemnly from among the watch fires, “*Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott,*”



*Camphausen*

NAPOLEON III AND BISMARCK AFTER SEDAN



and said to himself, "I understand." But the real reason for the terrible defeat was the utter incapacity on the part of the French Emperor, and of his generals and their staffs. Read Zola's *Débâcle*, and you have the story admirably told. On August 6 MacMahon's army was put to rout. After that Austria and Italy thought no more of coming in; and the Emperor, his own incompetence proved, resigned the command-in-chief to Marshal Bazaine. Paris prepared for a siege. The Germans moved on. On August 18, after the defeat at Gravelotte, Bazaine shut himself in Metz. The Emperor joined MacMahon, who was bringing up a second army to relieve Bazaine, but this army was defeated at Sedan, and the next day, September 2, Napoleon was forced to surrender with near 100,000 men. On September 4, when the news reached Paris, as a matter of course the Imperial government fell. The Empress fled, and at the Hôtel de Ville, where the republicans met in accordance with tradition, Gambetta and Jules Favre proclaimed the Republic, and instituted a government of defense. The siege of Paris was begun on September 19. On October 7 Gambetta escaped from the city in a balloon; he reached Tours, and with his fiery genius roused the whole country to the nation's defense, and raised new armies. In vain; on October 27, Bazaine surrendered Metz with 154,000 men, and immense military supplies. All France believed him to be a traitor. The German forces, which had been temporarily detained at Metz, now continued their advance. Amiens was captured in November, Orléans in December. And, in spite of Gambetta's efforts, the last French army found itself obliged to cross the Swiss border for safety, and was interned. On January 18, 1871, in the Galerie des Glaces, emblazoned and bedizened with the triumphs of Louis XIV, King William was proclaimed Emperor of

a united Germany. Paris was now in great distress; people ate dogs, cats, rats, the beasts in the Jardin des Plantes, anything even partially edible. On January 28 an armistice was signed and Paris capitulated.

In the meantime a national government had been improvised at Bordeaux. Elections were held. Of the six hundred and fifty members of the legislature, four hundred were royalists, two hundred republicans, and scarce thirty imperialists. Paris elected revolutionary deputies. Old Thiers, who had had a long and distinguished career, who had spoken against the war, who had gone from court to court seeking allies while Paris was besieged, and who occupied a moderate position, in favor of royalty but not antagonistic to a republic, was made the *chef du pouvoir exécutif de la République française*. He formed a ministry, and negotiated peace. Bismarck insisted upon the cession of Alsace and Lorraine, and five milliards of francs. Preliminaries were signed on February 26, and final terms on May 10.

But peace meant peace with Germany, and not between Frenchmen and Frenchmen. During the siege Paris had been in turmoil. The Government of National Defense had been self-appointed, and the proletariat was not satisfied. There were many malcontents, — revolutionary republicans, socialists, members of the International (founded in London in 1864), radicals of one kind and another, — who demanded the election of a municipal government for the city, a Commune de Paris. This the Government of National Defense hesitated to grant, fearful of a rival. The radicals made violent manifestations. The Government retaliated by a vain attempt to arrest the ringleaders, Blanqui (of the famous utterance, *Ni Dieu ni maître*) and Flourens. A compromise was effected, and a plebiscite held to say whether or no the population of



Paris wished to maintain the Government of National Defense. The ayes had it, nine to one. Nevertheless, within the National Guard, which had become a working-class organization, the radicals established committees and suchlike, sufficient political machinery to govern the city if they had the chance. After this vote, however, the agitation subsided until the end of the siege. Then the Devil broke loose. The population, excited, closely confined, having subsisted for months on insufficient food and too much alcohol, had fallen into a state of *ivresse morale*; they were hostile to the government of Bordeaux, which they believed to be dominated by royalists and reactionaries, and, with the old Jacobin love of despotic power, dreamed of a federation of communes in all France, managed by the workingmen under the domination of the Commune de Paris.

When the terms of the treaty of peace were known, the National Guard took their cannon to Montmartre, voted a general *Fédération républicaine de la garde nationale*, and announced that they would defend the Republic — that is, against the bourgeois government of Thiers and his associates. The business men of Paris took alarm, and asked Thiers to get possession of these cannon. Troops were sent, but they fraternized with the National Guard and the populace and refused to shoot; and a mob of enraged revolutionists seized and murdered two of the generals sent against them. And all the while the disciplined German army, which still occupied the forts of the city to the north and east, looked on, scornful spectators. The National Government, which had now moved from Bordeaux to Versailles, denounced the “murders in cold blood,” but, fearful of the experience of 1792–1793, it decided to evacuate the city and make preparations to reduce it to obedience. The revolutionists took possession

of the Hôtel de Ville, established a municipal government, and hoisted the red flag. The commune of 1793 seemed born again. They made some effort at negotiations. Jules Favre answered, "*On ne traite pas avec des assassins.*" So the Commune of Paris was arrayed in civil war against the National Government, *Communards* against *Versaillais*, or, as it is usually held, the working classes of Paris against the bourgeoisie.

The war lasted eight weeks. The National Government took the offensive on April 2. Seven weeks were spent in reducing the forts about the city, the eighth in street fighting in Paris itself. *Communards* and *Versaillais* divide the palm for ferocity. General Gallifet, who had distinguished himself at Sedan, proclaimed: "The war I make on these murderers shall know neither truce nor pity," and shot the first prisoners he took. The Commune replied by imprisoning as hostages all bourgeois in Paris who were suspected of sympathy with Versailles, and announced: "Every execution of a prisoner of war or of any partisan of the Commune of Paris shall be followed at once by the execution of thrice that number of hostages." The street fighting was bitter, especially around the Panthéon, at the Pont d'Austerlitz, and in the cemetery Père-Lachaise. The *Communards* attempted to set fire to the city as they were driven back. Bands of women, *pétroleuses*, were charged with the preliminary duty of pouring on oil. They demolished Thiers's house, they threw down the Napoleonic column in the Place Vendôme, they burned the palace of the Tuileries, they burned the Hôtel de Ville, and but for chance they would have destroyed the Louvre, the Sainte-Chapelle, and Notre-Dame. The *Versaillais* treated the *Communards* as outlaws, and stood men up against the wall on the ghost of a suspicion. It is said that 17,000 perished. For

several years military justice continued; some 38,000 were sent to prison on suspicion, 13,000 of them condemned, 270 put to death.

The National Government had been organized partly to procure a legal body that could enter into a binding agreement with Germany, and partly to establish a new régime. Now that a treaty of peace had been agreed upon, the main question was, Shall there be a monarchy or a republic? The great majority of the deputies at the beginning had been in favor of a monarchy. Desirous of order, they had been well frightened by the revolutionary *Communards* in Paris; desirous of peace, they had been alienated from the more radical republicans under Gambetta, who clamored to continue the war *à outrance*. They therefore judged that a monarchy would be the best guaranty of a stable and reasonable government. Thiers, to whom the assembly accorded the title President of the Republic, inclined that way. But after peace had been made there was less to be apprehended from Gambetta's followers, and after the Commune had been shot to pieces there was no further fear of revolution, and moderate men looked with less aversion on a republic. Nevertheless, it seems probable that the monarchists would have come to an agreement among themselves, — Bonapartists, who espoused the cause of Napoleon, or rather that of his son the Prince Imperial; Orléanists, who had espoused that of the comte de Paris, grandson to Louis-Philippe; and the legitimists, who were loyal to the elder branch of the Bourbons, represented by the comte de Chambord, who styled himself Henri V, — and that all would have supported the comte de Chambord, had it not been for the comte himself. At the Château de Chambord *les voitures de gala*, all gold and embossed, are still to be seen, ready to drive a king and his suite to the palais du Louvre.

But the comte de Chambord had legitimist principles, embodied in the white flag of the monarchy: "*Je suis le pilote nécessaire, le seul capable de conduire le navire au port.*" The country had no mind to go back to Bourbon absolutism. Thiers said that the comte de Chambord deserved "to be called the French Washington, for he had founded the Republic." So it proved.

The conservatives, finding Chambord hopeless, and the country inclining more and more to a republic, combined to overthrow Thiers, in the hope of setting up a régime from which a monarchy should be no very violent transition (May 1873). They then elected Maréchal MacMahon president, and drew up a constitution. The constitution of 1875 provided: a chamber of deputies elected by universal suffrage, one deputy for each arrondissement; a senate (elected by special bodies) of three hundred, to hold office for nine years, one third renewed every third year; a president, elected by the two chambers voting together, for a term of seven years, with command of the military and naval forces, with powers to make war with the advice of the chambers, to nominate to all government offices, and with the sanction of the senate to dissolve the chamber of deputies. The president had a cabinet of nine. There was also an advisory council of State. Each of the eighty-seven departments of the republic was to be administered by a *préfet* appointed by the president, and each arrondissement by a *sous-préfet*. In 1879 the chambers moved from Versailles to Paris, the senate to the Luxembourg, the chamber to the Palais-Bourbon. It is not worth our while to linger over past politics. The country inclined slowly but surely towards republicanism. The elections in 1877 and 1879 gave the republicans a majority in both houses. MacMahon resigned and Jules Grévy became president (1879-1887).

During the first part of this presidency, Gambetta was the most vivid personality. He was an *homme du midi*, from Cahors, endowed with a high-colored, extravagant gift of speech, — President Grévy, who did not like him, said, "*Ce n'est pas du français, c'est du cheval*," — a great seeker after popularity, desirous of *réclame*, with hail-fellow-well-met manners, of luxurious tastes and licentious life, and a thorough politician. Under Grévy he was president of the chamber. At this time, abroad, France took possession of Tunis and Tonkin; while, at home, the chief matters of political interest were the revival of socialism and the adoption of severe measures against the clergy and the religious orders, in particular against the Society of Jesus; Gambetta formulated this attitude: *Le cléricalisme, voilà l'ennemi!* Gambetta died in 1882; and the next melodramatic figure is General Boulanger.

This general, a radical, who did not disdain the arts of popularity, had been made minister of war in January 1886, on the recommendation of Clemenceau, then an important member of the chamber, and busied himself with the reorganization of the army. Paris, for the most part, radical and patriotic, soon entertained an extravagant admiration for this radical and patriotic soldier. At the *fête nationale*, July 14, that summer, he was acclaimed so loudly as to frighten the republican party. In May 1887 the radicals shouted that he was the necessary man to save the country from the Bourbons. His principles seem to have been: revision of the constitution which the proletariat regarded as undemocratic, and refusal to knuckle under to Germany. The city of Paris marched and sang in his honor, "*C'est Boulanger qu'il nous faut*." Adversaries cried that he wished to be dictator and was pushing France to war. Excitement grew hot, for the



country was nervous. Bismarck still threatened, or seemed to threaten, that he would reduce France to a second-rate Power. The radicals divided; those that did not want a *rapprochement* with Germany, that did not like the existing constitution, shouted for Boulanger, while the other half feared a dictator. The monarchists joined the Boulangists for the purpose of overthrowing the republican government. At this inauspicious juncture the parliamentary republic, with enemies on the right and on the left, received a hard blow. It transpired that President Grévy's son-in-law was selling decorations of the Legion of Honor. Grévy was forced out, and Sadi Carnot elected president (December 1887). Boulanger became even more threatening. The government sought to defend itself and retired Boulanger, who thereupon stood for election as deputy and was triumphantly elected over the government's candidate by an enormous majority. Popular enthusiasm for him was rampant. Had he been willing to take opportunity by the forelock and enter the Élysées Palace by force, he could have overthrown the government. But he preferred to wait and enter by legal means. The government spread the charge that the triumph of Boulanger would mean war with Germany, and began to make arrangements to prepare the senate as a high court of justice. This rendered Boulanger apprehensive that he was to be arrested. Unfortunately for his political career, he had fallen in love, and liberty with love was sweeter than ambition. He fled to Brussels. From that time on his greatness faded faster than it had risen.

One effect followed. The government realized from Boulanger's popularity that the nation did not wish to truckle to Germany, but to stand up for its rights, and it therefore answered the Triple Alliance (1882) — Ger-

many, Austria, and Italy — by the dual alliance of France and Russia (1891). The Republic was strengthened by this guaranty of peace by equilibrium; and at the same time the government of moderate republicans was also strengthened, as against the monarchical right, because Pope Leo XIII bade good Catholics recognize the Republic, and as against the radical left, because various radicals, among them Clemenceau, were reputed to be smirched by corruption in connection with the Panama Canal, which de Lesseps was then trying to dig. By these events the moderates were firmly seated. In 1894, President Carnot was murdered by an anarchist. His successor, Casimir-Périer, discouraged by the presidential lack of power, resigned (1895), and Felix Faure was elected.

Now comes *l'affaire Dreyfus*, in consequence of which the radicals, in union with the socialists, obtained control of the government. Clemenceau, the radical, was able to return after temporary effacement, and Jean Jaurès, the socialist, stepped into prominence.

## FROM DREYFUS TO THE GREAT WAR

IN 1894, upon accusation of having sold military documents to Germany, a captain in the artillery, Dreyfus, a Jew, was condemned by court-martial, with every embroidery of degradation, and deported to Devil's Island, off Guiana. The only evidence was a letter, called the *bordereau*, supposed to have been written by Dreyfus to the German ambassador. The motives of condemnation were: the wish to preserve the confidence of the nation in the fidelity and vigilance of the army; dislike of the Jews. The minister of war, Mercier, in order to secure conviction, sent a secret *dossier*, undivulged to the accused, to the court-martial. The Dreyfus family, supported by the Jews generally, asserted his innocence and began to agitate. Colonel Picquart, an honest man, charged by the war office to bolster up the case, discovered that the letter to the ambassador, the *bordereau*, had not been written by Dreyfus, but by one Esterhazy, an officer of Hungarian extraction. The war office, wishing to regard the affair as closed, sent Picquart to Tunis, and, to cover up their tracks, tried and acquitted Esterhazy. The partisans of revision now appealed to the public. Émile Zola, the most famous man of letters in France, addressed an open letter to the President of the Republic, entitled *J'accuse*.

The agitation spread. Politicians were afraid to support a revision because popular sentiment, fanned by nationalists and Catholics, and strongly against Dreyfus, looked upon the issue as one between the honor of the

army and the Jews. Zola was tried and convicted, but the judgment was reversed for technical reasons on appeal, and before a second trial he escaped to England. But Zola had raised the issue for truth and justice. Jaurès and Clemenceau joined in. The discord between revisionists and antirevisionists waxed furious. A new minister of war, Godefroy Cavaignac, produced what he alleged to be a confession from Dreyfus. Picquart wrote to say that he could prove the confession a forgery; the government put him in prison. After this the affair completely dominated politics. Cavaignac was obliged to admit that the confession was a forgery, and a certain Colonel Henry admitted that he was the forger. Henry was locked up, and a razor case left with him; the next morning he was found dead, with his throat cut. Cavaignac resigned, Esterhazy fled to England, and public opinion recognized that a new trial must be had. Waldeck-Rousseau was prime minister, General Galliffet minister of war. A second court-martial was held at Rennes (1899). With feeling running so high, the government solved the difficult problem after an adroit Latin fashion: Dreyfus was condemned a second time, and promptly pardoned, and the minister of war announced, "*L'incident est clos.*" One effect of this great agitation was to discredit the moderate republican party that had been so long in power, and to smooth the way for radicals and socialists. Even before this, Waldeck-Rousseau, in order to win socialist support, had taken Alexandre Millerand into the cabinet.

After this the political drift towards the left became more and more marked. In 1902 Waldeck-Rousseau lost the election, and the radical party came to power, under Émile Combes, at the time a senator. The advent of the radicals was marked by a great burst of anticlericalism, for

the radicals regarded the Church as the mainstay of conservatism and privilege, the natural ally of monarchists and reactionaries. The attack began by the dissolution of congregations that had not been authorized by the government, and that meant the suppression of Catholic schools taught by members of orders, as well as the dispersion of monks, friars, and nuns. Of course, this action was bitterly resented by the Church. The government also quarreled with the Pope over the investiture of bishops, and, even after the fall of Combes (January 1905), continued to the logical conclusion by enacting legislation separating State and Church. In this Aristide Briand played a leading part. The legislation followed certain simple principles: there must be liberty of conscience, and liberty of worship, but the State would not recognize any state religion. The government took the legal title to church property, leaving citizens free to organize themselves into bodies of worshipers, and to use the churches gratis. In fact, the government established very much the religious usage in the United States.

At the end of President Loubet's term, Fallières was elected (January 1900), and the names of Clemenceau, Briand, Millerand, Poincaré, became familiar words. But now an episode of great importance in foreign affairs claims our attention. After the Franco-Prussian War France had turned towards colonial expansion in North Africa and in Asia. For a time she went hand in hand with England in Egyptian matters, but dropped out of them again; nevertheless, she resented England's appropriation of Egypt, and, not very wisely, sent Captain Marchand across Central Africa, from the Congo to Fachoda in the Soudan, for the purpose of thwarting England's occupation. England, having conquered the dervishes of the Soudan, had no mind to be ousted, and notified France



that Captain Marchand's stay there would mean war. The French evacuated the fort. This friction, however, though sharp at the time, was afterwards appeased. Delcassé, at the head of foreign affairs, thanks to the kindly feeling of Edward VII, arranged that England should be left in sole control of Egypt, and that France might assume a protectorate over Morocco (1904). The two nations acted as if they alone were concerned with North Africa, and left Germany quite out of the reckoning. Germany resented being left out, and the next year, after Russia, France's ally, had been very gravely weakened by the disastrous war with Japan, the Emperor William II landed at Tangier and, in flat opposition to France, announced that he regarded the Sultan of Morocco as an independent sovereign, and hoped that Morocco would remain open to all nations equally (March 31, 1905). A German mission was sent to Fez, and the German government demanded an international conference to regulate the situation of Morocco. This action occasioned much alarm in France. Delcassé wished to bring England in and defy Germany, but the other ministers and the Chamber of Deputies were frightened; they were not willing to run any risk of war. The proposal of an international conference was accepted, and Delcassé was forced to resign. This was a distinct moral victory for Germany and a moral defeat for France. At the conference at Algeciras, however, France came off the better of the two. France and Russia acted together, and England, feeling antagonistic to Germany, drew near them; and, not long afterwards, the three nations entered into what was called the Triple Entente. This, they hoped, would set the equilibrium of Europe firmly on its feet. But this equilibrium did not bring the hoped-for assurance of peace. Germany saw in the entente between France and

England a purpose to shut her out of Africa, out from the possibility of colonies for her teeming population, and of markets for her swelling trade. She did not propose to submit. One morning, therefore, in 1911 a German gunboat, the Panther, anchored off Agadir, a sea-coast town in southern Morocco, and the German government notified France that, if France was to take Morocco, Germany must have compensation in the Congo. So it was done; Germany renounced her claims to Morocco and received a slice of the French Congo. But this action of Germany gave great offense to France.

In the meantime, as I have said, in political matters at home the centre of gravity had been shifting towards the left. The radicals had come into power, and had waged war against the Church, as the citadel of reaction, while to their left the socialists were steadily gaining in power and solidity of organization, and beyond the socialists at the extreme left there arose a revolutionary working-class party. This party believed in the class struggle, would have no dealings with the bourgeoisie, and therefore refrained from direct participation in politics. Out of it grew the *Confédération Générale du Travail*, a trade-union organization (1895), and the *syndicalisme révolutionnaire*, a doctrine that advocated *direct action*, sabotage, the general strike, and so on, shading off into various colors of anarchy, with the ultimate goal of a social revolution that should destroy capitalism and end in the triumph and felicity of the laboring man. In 1907 Clemenceau was defeated, and Briand, a titular socialist, formed a cabinet consisting mainly of radicals; but responsibility exercised a sobering (or, if you prefer, deadening) effect, and when the railroad employees in the Compagnie du Nord, a State railroad, struck, Briand mobilized them as soldiers and

forced them to continue work (1910). But the fluctuations of office are too frequent to be recounted here. The socialists have been accused of too much faith in their Utopian theories of international peace, and therefore of neglecting military preparations. Caillaux who obtained great notoriety afterwards (first because his wife shot the editor of a newspaper, and second from suspicion that he was a traitor), formed a ministry for a brief time (1911); and then, after the alarming incident of Agadir, in order to show Germany a united front under a firm head, Raymond Poincaré, belonging to the progressive group, was made premier, with Briand and Millerand, nominally socialists, in his cabinet (January 1912). A year later Poincaré was elected President of the Republic, and prime ministers succeeded one another fast — Briand, Barthou, Doumergue, Ribot, and Viviani (June 1914), who was in office when the Great War broke out.

The political equilibrium established by the Triple Alliance and the Triple Entente was of a most delicate and unstable character. Jealousy and suspicion were everywhere at work. Germany believed that France and England meant to shut her in and nail a cover down upon her ever-expanding strength; England feared German rivalry on the ocean and in the commerce of the world; France believed that Germany was always trying to bully her and was merely biding a favorable moment for another war. Russia and Austria were fishing in the troubled waters of the Balkan peninsula. All Europe was armed to the teeth, and very nervous; the nations eyed one another like a group of Bret Harte's gamblers seated at poker, with bowie knives in their belts and cocked pistols beside them. The explosion took place in the Balkans. But who can say where the beginning was, the cause of causes? Germany, having taken Alsace and Lorraine, encouraged

France to obtain compensation in colonial enterprises. So France took Morocco. That taking left Italy afraid lest she should sit by hungry, so Italy took Tripoli from the Turks. Bulgaria, Serbia, and Greece, seeing Turkey in trouble, fell upon her and wrested away most of her European provinces; then the spoliators fell out, and Serbia, Greece, and Roumania defeated Bulgaria. Turkey and Bulgaria, despoiled and sore, looked to Germany to protect them against the Slavs. The Pan-Slavs, on their part, wished to deliver Bosnia and Herzegovina from Austria, who, having been authorized by a European conference to administer them, had taken advantage of a favorable opportunity to annex them, contrary to the mandate of the conference. Austria, fearful of dismemberment, wanted to secure herself by destroying Serbia. In like manner, long sequences of cause and consequence ran, in inextricable tangle, through politics, through economics, through national rivalries, patriotisms, cupidities, and prejudices.

There were danger signals enough. France increased her period of military service to three years; Germany laid a tax of 1,000,000,000 marks for military expenditures. Ministers and diplomats grew more and more tense and irritable. At last the steel struck the flint. The Archduke of Austria went into Bosnia to attend a military manœuvre, and was murdered by a student, a Slav of Bosnia (June 28, 1914). Austria accused Serbia of fomenting the plot, and sent the most exacting ultimatum, demanding a reply within forty-eight hours (July 23). The spark had lighted the fuse, and the train of powder had caught. Dispatches, conferences, proposals, suggestions, appeals, were multiplied in vain. The Triple Entente was convinced that Germany had long been resolved to strike and now judged the occasion opportune; Germany

and Austria believed that they must not wait and give the Triple Entente the advantage of choosing their own time. Austria mobilized (July 26-27) and declared war against Serbia (July 28). Russia then mobilized to protect Serbia; Germany, upholding Austria, declared war against Russia (August 1), and demanded of France what she would do. France replied that she would be true to her obligations. Germany thereupon declared war on France (August 3). Premier Viviani, an eloquent orator, called for *l'union sacrée* of all Frenchmen, recounted to the legislature what had happened: "*Ce qu'on attaque, ce sont les libertés de l'Europe, dont la France, ses alliés et ses amis sont fiers d'être les défenseurs . . . nous sommes sans reproches, nous serons sans peur.*" On August 4 the Germans violated their treaty to respect the Belgian border, and on the fifth England declared war.

The German plan was to strike hard on the western front and knock out France in three weeks, and then turn upon Russia. In order to avoid the difficulties of the region to the south, it was expedient for them to go through Belgium, contrary to treaty. On Belgium's refusal to let them pass, the German army attacked Liège (August 6), and captured the last fort on the sixteenth. They then advanced on a long front, seven armies in all, stretching from Liège to Strasbourg. They were not numerically superior to the French, but better drilled, and for the most part better led, far better equipped with heavy cannon, with better telephonic service, and far superior in aviation. To the north the German invaders swept all before them. With the southern end of their line pivoted near Verdun, the five northern armies swung round, like the hand of a clock going backward, obliged the British Expeditionary Force to retreat from Mons, beat the French badly at Charleroi (August 20-24), and compelled the whole



French line to swing back before them, with the French right resting on Verdun, until the French left was near Meaux, scarce twenty miles from Paris. The Germans had passed Laon, Soissons, Reims, the river Seine, and in part the Marne. The armies faced one another in a line running nearly east and west. General von Kluck had command of the German army corps on the extreme right of the German line. The original German plan had been for their whole line to sweep westward. This plan would have carried von Kluck north of Paris, and in fact he reached Senlis, a town about twenty-five miles north of Paris. On September 3, at half-past six in the afternoon, General Gallieni, the military governor of Paris, whose statue you see in the Place des Invalides, learned that von Kluck had turned and was marching southeast. The Germans' plan had been changed, and their object now was to come between the French army and Paris. Gallieni ordered General Maunoury, commander of the sixth French army, lately improvised for the defense of Paris, to march eastward against von Kluck's flank, and then took a division of the 4th corps that had just arrived, requisitioned all the taxicabs in Paris, and hurried them out to Nanteuil-le-Haudouin to aid Maunoury's attack. The battle of the Marne began on September 6, and lasted till September 13. A good-sized library exists as to who is entitled to the credit of the victory. Some say that Marshal Joffre, as commander-in-chief, deserves it, as he would have had to bear the blame of a defeat; others say Gallieni. English writers give much to the British army. This victory crushed the German expectation of a quick decision, but the French hopes that the invaders would be driven back, as they had been after the battle of Valmy in 1792, were equally disappointed.

The Germans entrenched. By January 1915 the en-

trenched lines extended from the North Sea almost due south, by or near Dixmude, Ypres, Arras, almost to Compiègne, then, turning a little south of east via Soissons to the Argonne, they circled the north of Verdun, to St. Mihiel, then ran east again to Pont-à-Mousson, and so on in a southeasterly and southerly direction through the Vosges to the Swiss border. The fighting gathered and swelled in different parts at different times — in Flanders (October–November 1914), in Champagne (February–March 1915), in Artois (May–September 1915). The worst came in February 1916. The Germans had driven the Russians back, and now, free in the east, they returned for a still more savage drive in the west, and selected Verdun as the best place. The attack began on February 21. For several days the assaults were very violent, and matters looked black. The fort of Douaumont was captured on the twenty-fifth. General Pétain was summoned; he took command at midnight. He did not come into the city, but established his headquarters at Souilly, a few miles to the south. For a week he was ill and confined to his room. There, keeping his illness a secret, he marked out a line that must be inviolable, and organized the positions of his troops. Little by little the Germans advanced on the north and east. February passed into March, March into April, and the furious assaults on the French outer lines continued. La Côte du Poivre, la Côte 304, Douaumont, le Mort-Homme, became more terrible than the lowest circles in Dante's *Inferno*. Pétain cheered on his men. "*Courage! On les aura!*" At the end of April, Pétain was ordered to take command of the group of armies in the centre, and General Nivelle succeeded him. On this date the Allied preparations for an attack along the Somme became obvious; General Falkenhayn, the German Chief-of-

Staff, stated that "a fresh success on the Meuse is necessary," and new assaults were made in June. Joffre, with an eye to his offensive on the Somme, was equally positive that the defenders must hold out: "*Le salut de la France est en jeu; aucun sacrifice ne sera trop lourd pour l'assurer.*" On June 23 the situation was very critical. On the twenty-fourth the battle of the Somme began. The German attacks, however, were continued till September third. In vain; the battle of Verdun was won.

## XXXVI

### FIFTY YEARS OF ART

LET us leave the din and turmoil of war and glance back at the arts and literature. In 1863 a *Salon des Refusés* exhibited works by Édouard Manet (1832-1883), Fantin-Latour (1836-1904), Pissarro (1831-1903), Cazin (1841-1901), and Harpignies (1819-1916), as well as of the American Whistler. You may see their portraits in Fantin-Latour's picture of "Manet's Studio at Batignolles," in the Luxembourg. All became distinguished, some famous, and all are represented in the galleries of the Louvre or the Luxembourg. They were disciples, more or less, of Courbet, partisans of realism and the *plein-air*.

Manet's "Olympia," now in the Louvre, was first exhibited in 1865, to the scandal of the respectable bourgeoisie of the Second Empire. Manet broke with the classical school completely; he undertook to look at the world, and to paint it, in a new way, without quite knowing what way. He admired the dark-shadowed Spanish painters and Frans Hals; one is at times tempted to class him as a follower of Goya. His oppositions of black and white, his broad flat surfaces, his simplifying method of painting a face, — see "Le Fifre" in the Louvre, the "Boy with a Sword" and the "Girl with a Parrot" in the Metropolitan Museum, — show that he was not closely copying what his eye beheld. Manet leads up to the impressionists, Claude Monet (1840-1926), Pissarro (1831-1903), Renoir (1841-1919), and others.

All classifications are for convenience merely. Renoir said, "*Avec la nature on ne fait rien*," and, when asked where one should learn, answered, "*Au musée, parbleu*." His conspicuous characteristics have been said to be loveliness and ease; and, of course, like every other great painter, his manner changed from period to period. He was a good fellow, too. He said: "When I look at the old masters, *je me fais l'effet d'un bien petit bonhomme*, and yet I believe that enough of my work will last to ensure me a place in *l'école française*, that school that I love so well, *qui est si gentille, si claire, de si bonne compagnie. . . . Et pas tapageuse*."

These painters held an exposition in 1874, and were greeted with boisterous ridicule by the public and by most critics. They bided their time and arrived. They devised a method of depicting light by putting little dabs of pure color in close contrast. They reversed the spectrum analysis, and made a synthesis of the primary colors; they dabbed yellow, red, blue, in juxtaposition and let the spectator's eye blend them into a white light. In the main they concerned themselves with effects of sunlight out-of-doors. Monet is usually spoken of as the chief of the school. The reader will know his series of the façade of Rouen Cathedral, painted severally at nine o'clock, at ten, at noon, at three, at five, with light presenting its different harmonies at the several hours, now mauve and blue, now azure and pale gold, all which he paints as if the cathedral front were a fantastic device to catch light in bays and recesses, on shaft, moulding, and crocket.

No doubt the impressionists added to pictorial resources in painting light, but they wandered far from solidity of form; they pictured the object as an interplay of lights, a creation of the atmosphere, almost a mirage; and later painters have departed from their methods and their



aims. Subsequent groups are known by name, but there are also individual painters who stand by themselves: Edgar Degas (1834-1917), for instance, the painter of ballet dancers, who has been called an impressionist of line; and indeed he is generally classified as an impressionist, but he painted in his atelier and not out-of-doors. He was original in the poses of his danseuses, and very original in character. A lady took her child to him and said: "My son paints, and he is *tellement sincère devant la nature*." "How old is your son, madam?" "Nearly fifteen." Degas: "*Si jeune et déjà sincère devant la nature! Eh bien! Madame, il est perdu*." And, in looking at Monet's "Le Christ aux anges," now in the Metropolitan Museum, he said, "There's drawing in that picture! And what transparency of color! *Ah, le cochon!*" Degas also modeled some delightful little statuettes of dancing girls.

Paul Cézanne (1839-1906) also is classed with the impressionists, but he had his own ways of painting. He composed pictures as if he were dealing with blocks, of very delicately conceived shapes, half metaphysical, whose substance in its most solid state bore but a weird relation to reality. He was no draughtsman, but a pure painter, quite "indifferent to verisimilitude," who by dabs of superposition and juxtaposition brought *pour ceux qui savaient voir* out of a *chaos enragé de tons* the planes and contours of his object. And so, *grave et mystique*, proved himself — that is, to those that had eyes to see — a *parfait magicien*. Some critics speak of his *peinture maçonnée* by trowel and thumb; others say that "his painting is, first of all, *une exaltation raisonnée et intelligente des couleurs*." In the beginning he was singled out from all the impressionists for special scorn and laughter; more than anyone else he made "the Philistines bellow."

His admirers say that he is one of the great constructive artists of the world, the Christopher Columbus of a new continent of form; at any rate, he became a source of great inspiration to the next generation, and most of the best-known men of that generation derive from the impressionists and from him.

Paul Gauguin (1848-1903) stands by himself, very near the crossroads where connoisseurs go one way and common folk, like ourselves, the other; but even of common folk he has persuaded a good many to go along with him. Trammeled in Paris by wife and children, by the obligation of providing for them imposed by conventional bourgeois society, he left France and went to Tahiti, where he at once felt at home in the frankness of nature, and pursued his art, seeking to catch the rich colors of the tropics. At any rate, he simplified painting by dropping the third dimension, as well as various rules of drawing that had been generally accepted since Masaccio's time. He justified this innovation by the success of his decoration with its "superb" color, and by his seriousness and sincerity.

Van Gogh (1853-1890), a Dutchman by birth, is often spoken of in connection with Gauguin, but he is essentially different. He died crazy. It is said *toute la peinture explose, picrate, fulgure, flambe, par son œuvre*. But now and again there is a vivid assertion of a peculiarly personal relation between painter and sitter, as in the "Postman" and the "Postman's Wife," that expresses itself in strident colors and self-assertive tones, intelligible to sympathetic onlookers. In one letter he writes: "Now I have finished two larger drawings: First, 'Sorrow' . . . only the figure. . . . But the pose has been changed a little, the hair is not hanging down the back, but falls over the shoulder partly in a plait. So the shoulder, the neck

and the back are more in view. . . . The other: 'The Roots,' represents some tree roots on a sandy ground. I have tried to put into the landscape the same sentiment as in the figure. The clinging convulsively and passionately to the earth, and yet being half torn up by the storm. In that pale slender woman's figure as well as in the black, gnarled and knotty roots, I wanted to express something of the struggle for life. Or rather I tried to be faithful to nature as I saw it before me, without philosophizing about it; involuntarily, in both cases something of that great struggle is shown. At least it seemed to me that there was some sentiment in them. . . . True painters are guided by that conscience that is called sentiment. . . . Zola . . . says . . . a beautiful thing about art in general: *Dans le tableau (l'œuvre de l'art) je cherche, j'aime l'homme — l'artiste.* . . . Illusions may fade, but the *sublime* remains. If one should doubt of everything, one does not doubt of people like Corot and Millet and Delacroix. . . . My God, how beautiful Shakespeare is!" And his definition of art, made before he began to paint seriously, is comprehensible, too: "'*L'art, c'est l'homme ajouté à la nature,*' nature, reality, truth, but with a significance, a conception, a character, which the artist brings out in it, and to which he gives expression, '*qu'il dégage,*' which he disentangles, and makes free and clears up." The word "artist" means, "I am seeking, I am striving, I am in it with all my heart." In fact, his admirations are very comprehensible and catholic, and though he was eccentric all his life, he seems to have been free from madness till he and Gauguin were at Arles together. His letters call forth a deep sympathy, and a desire to appreciate the great qualities in his painting.

On a bypath that branches out from Gauguin's, unless

it should turn out to be the king's highroad, Henri Matisse (b. 1869), avoiding the *profanum vulgus*, pursued his individual way. He aimed at decoration, dealt autocratically with the objects of nature, reshaping them according to the practice of primitive peoples, in order to produce certain rhythmic effects. But it requires both training and intuition to comprehend him. As an admirer says, "It is the supreme privilege of artistic creation that professors and critics cannot lay hold of its most important element. And we cannot be too glad that an art like that of Matisse, into which reason enters as much as it should, cannot become the spoil of academic reasoners, nor in any wise be confused with painting which *demonstrates* and *explains*. As to that, the explanations that we get from a picture by Matisse, supposing we get any, rise before us entirely simple and by no means novel. All we exclaim is: How well he has chosen! *Comme il a su prendre parti!* What freshness of vision! And, what a will aids that vision! *Quel accord! Quelle surprise!*" At least it is well to know what to say when confronted by a Matisse. But I may add that it is said that a Japanese connoisseur came to Europe and found no pure art between the period of the French primitives and Matisse.

But I leave that side current of art and go back to the larger channel. A few years before 1890, *neo-impressionisme* showed itself. The technique of this school was quite different from that of the impressionists; the two schools agreed only in their goal — light and color. The neo-impressionists sought to attain a maximum of luminosity, coloration, and harmony, and they adopted a certain method which they called *la division*. This they secured by:

1. *Le mélange optique de pigments uniquement purs (toutes les teintes du prisme et tous leurs tons)*

2. *La séparation des divers éléments (couleur locale, couleur d'éclairage, leurs réactions, etc.)*

3. *L'équilibre de ces éléments et leur proportion (selon les lois du contraste, de la dégradation, et de l'irradiation)*

4. *Le choix d'une touche proportionnée à la dimension du tableau*

This is too intricate a matter for ordinary tourists, but we may see an excellent picture, "The Circus," in one of the rooms of the Louvre, *premier étage*, by Seurat (1859-1891), that will enable the curious to judge the merits of this method.

After this group came the assemblage of painters known vaguely as post-impressionists, often characterized by distortion and black outlines. There is Picasso and the cubists, of whom an unsympathetic English critic says, "Cézanne must be held responsible for the drift of pictorial art into that hocus-pocus of planes, cylinders, and pyramids," and an equally unsympathetic French critic, "*Aujourd'hui le bloc cubiste suinte, perd son sang, s'évacue en ordures et en immondices fétides*"; while, on the other hand, Picasso's admirers say that "all the world over are students and young painters to whom his mere name is thrilling, to whom Picasso is the liberator." There are also futurists, neoclassicists, *surréalistes*, and so on. Of these last a critic says that down in the depths of subconsciousness there are fantastic swarms of broken fragments of dreams, and that these break out and impregnate thoughts of waking reality with an energy and vividness that otherwise they never would have had. But admirers of Derain, H. Rousseau and their fellows must go elsewhere for a proper discussion of their idols.

But quite apart from these main roads of art, — or bypaths, as they may prove to be, — various painters, following different methods, have become famous for a



time: Meissonier (1815-1891), with his meticulously dainty pictures of cuirassiers, of "Napoleon at Friedland" and such, finished with the perfection of commonplace nicety; Cabanel (1823-1889), Bonnat (1833-1922), fashionable in their day; Bouguereau (1825-1905), with his extraordinary hardness of color, admired academically and hooted at by the Bohemians — "a Bouguereau can realize completely"; Henri Regnault (1843-1871), killed in the Franco-Prussian War; Bastien-Lepage (1848-1884); Raffaëlli (1850-1924), so clever with his dark lines; Carrière (1849-1906), a peasant, who overlaid the face of harsh reality with a tender gray haze, blotting out the meaner aspects of humanity, so that his portraits — mother and child, Paul Verlaine, peasants, the Crucified Christ — appear in a veiled radiance that ennobles and consoles; Henri Martin (*b.* 1860), an impressionist painter of dancing lights; and many other men of more or less distinction, so rich is French painting in the last half of the nineteenth century.

Puvis de Chavannes (1824-1898) was a decorator, but of quite another style than that which afterwards commended itself to Gauguin and Matisse. His great mural pictures breathe tranquillity, peace on earth, good will to men. The draughtsmanship is far from perfect, if one compares his figures with life, but these allegorical figures are not corporeal — they float in the "light that never was, on sea or land," spirits of gentleness, shapes angelical, murmuring *pax vobiscum*. Not since Fra Angelico has a painter had such healing in his brush. He has caught the *truth* that Goethe spoke of in respect to Claude, leaving commonplace reality for those that prefer it.

In sculpture, Carpeaux (1827-1875) possessed, they say, a *naturalisme fougueux*; but some beneficent influence — could it be the pleasure-loving society of the Second

Empire? — must have been at work to enable him to capture so much ideal beauty: young Apollo and the Dancing Girls in front of the opera house, the lovely Nymph and Cupids on the Pavillon de Flore, and the four stalwart allegorical women holding up the world — Asia, Africa, America, and Europe — in that noblest of fountains, la Fontaine de l'Observatoire, at the end of the Luxembourg gardens. He is a realist in that he treats the human form with conscientious devotion, but he finds his beauty in the realm of the ideal. Frémiet (1824-1910), a pupil of Rude, modeled the glorious sea horses, dolphins, and tortoises for that same Fontaine de l'Observatoire, and the gilded Jeanne d'Arc who bestrides her horse and holds her banner high in the Place des Pyramides. Critics find in his chisel a similarity, a discipleship, to the charming and admirable Florentine sculptors of the Renaissance. They say the same of Falguière (1831-1900), and add that he has a *prédilection pour les fortes nudités féminines*, as, for instance, in his "Diane chasse-resse." He, too, is a realist, — see his "Saint Vincent de Paul" in the Panthéon, — tempered by a love of beauty, and memories of the Florentine Renaissance. Dalou (1838-1902) is of such importance that he (as well as Rude, Carpeaux, Chapu, and Barye) has a Salle in the Louvre named after him. Because he liked movement, critics say that he inclined to the baroque. Look at his Monument de la République in the Place de la Nation, or at that to Delacroix in the Luxembourg Gardens, and judge for yourself. But in him, as in the others, it is not hard to see the persistence of the great classic tradition, according to which the business of the artist is to create beauty. Mercié (1845-1916) has no marked characteristics that distinguish him from the others; he was a sympathetic spirit, with a delicate mastery of his craft; you will

see in the Luxembourg a David sheathing his sword which you might expect to come upon in the Bargello at Florence, and also that sad statue, "Le Souvenir," a sweet memorial of sorrow. Chapu (1833-1891) is another of them; his Jeanne d'Arc, a noble figure, still follows the great traditions of the Renaissance in its beauty, nobility, and calm. I have mentioned these men (and I might mention others) in order to show how many sculptors of distinguished merit, as well as painters, France produced in this period.

But the puissant Rodin (1840-1917) towers above them all. He never modeled anything with more charm, with more of the *joie de vivre*, than Carpeaux's "La Danse," nor more excellent in their several ways than various works of these other sculptors; but by the subtlety of his modeling, by his force, by his intellectual power, his daring, his originality, he surpasses them all, and his admirers have hailed him as the greatest sculptor since Michael Angelo. He knows anatomy so well that his first famous statue, the "Boy with Uplifted Hands," was thought to have been cast from life, and his portrait busts are admirable, but he is not what is technically called a realist; others call him an impressionist, but I think they mean no more than that his receding planes, his modelings of rounding surfaces, catch the light and shadow as if such had been his only purpose. Every visitor to Paris goes to the Musée Rodin. The "Burghers of Calais," the "Penseur," the "Baiser," are world-famous. But still more sympathetic is a "Daughter of Danaë," — the scale is very small, — who kneels, with her head thrown forward in despair so that her disheveled hair flows upon the ground, and her exquisitely modeled little back bending under grief, a very litany of desolation; and also another small piece of sculpture, — now in America, I believe, — a "Paolo and Francesca," two little figures floating back to back,

suffering the torments of the damned, and yet comforted and, were such a word applicable in Hell, blessed by each other's presence. Indeed, one is tempted to say that the little figures are not only more sympathetic, but of greater excellence, than the big. Later in his career, apparently under the influence of the symbolist movement, Rodin affected the incomplete, the bizarre, the grandiose, as in his "Balzac." I have no room for the younger sculptors of to-day, with their talents and their waywardness, except to mention Charles Despiau (1874- ), who in his portrait busts, by his calm self-reliance, his broad yet subtle modeling, causes his admirers to hail him as a new Houdon.

In architecture there are the familiar monuments in Paris, relics of expositions, the Trocadéro (1878), the Grand Palais, the Petit Palais, the Pont Alexandre III (1900), and on the hill of Montmartre, a votive offering for the sins that caused defeat in the Franco-Prussian War, the great basilica of the Sacré-Cœur (1875-1914) designed in the Romanesque-Byzantine style of Périgord, by Paul Abadie, which, seen across Paris late of an afternoon, touched by rosy light, looks like the portal of Heaven. There is the Opéra (1861-1874), designed by Charles Garnier; a great basilica on the hill above Lyons; a wayward cathedral at Marseilles; and so on. But these buildings, some of them very interesting in themselves, are less interesting to-day than the general movement of *le style moderne*, for architecture, though far less impressionable to passing fashions than painting or sculpture, is the work of men who come under the influence of current æsthetic ideas. Modern French architecture is at times frankly revolutionary; and at times merely seeks new forms and new ornament, either to meet new uses to which buildings are put, or to satisfy newly awakened sensibilities, or because of the nature of concrete

and steel. It is hard to characterize anything so protean as the architecture of buildings of all sorts; but one may name the new stadium at Lyons, and the new market there, with its immense area and low roof; the casino at Saint-Raphaël, solidly cool; the Opéra Municipal at Marseilles, with its diversified sides set off by its portico of Ionic columns and heavy entablature; private houses in Paris and elsewhere, austere, intolerantly simple, rectilinear, or with rounding projections, with their wall spaces and rows of windows in horizontal layers, the whole restfully stolid; shops, such as the Nouvelle Annexe of the Bon Marché; the Église Saint-Louis at Vincennes, where the construction of the roof, divided into panels by a series of ribs, requires a scheme of decoration of its own; and, in particular, the church of Notre-Dame de Raincy, near Paris, with its high narrow tower, its stiff and solemn vertical lines, its walls, all windows of small panes with geometrical designs, its slender columns, and the scalloped ceilings of the bays — the whole a bold challenge to the ecclesiastical past; and its fellow church, also built by A. and G. Perret, at Saint-Denis, *d'une esthétique absolument nouvelle*, which is another marked model of originality.

But *le style moderne* in France, resulting in the main from material, function, and economy, is not very different from that elsewhere, and gives no very idiosyncratic *émotion plastique*. Generalizations are of little value; architects of the new style say that "the plan is the essence of architectural feeling, that geometry is important as the constituent of volume, and its envelope of surface, and that the play of light on simple and primary forces is equally important." One feels that this idea might have been expressed more simply. As the shepherd in the ballad says to King John, "These are hard questions for my shallow wit"; and I leave them there.



## XXXVII

### FIFTY YEARS OF LITERATURE

LITERATURE in this half-century is as interesting as the fine arts. The influence of Science exerts itself as powerfully as that of philosophy did two hundred years before, and Hippolyte Taine plays a rôle almost equal to that of Descartes. The romantic style was relegated to limbo; the duty of literature was to follow nature under the guidance of Science. Novelists regarded themselves as scientific men, kept notebooks in which they jotted down, like doctors, symptoms that interested them, and deemed it their duty to portray the inevitable sequence of cause and effect. They accepted Taine's apothegm, "*Le vice et la vertu sont des produits comme le sucre et le vitriol*" (1863), and explained human actions as the product of physico-chemical laws. During this period Émile Zola (1840-1902) dominated the art of novel writing, — you will see a fine portrait of him by Manet in the Salle des États, — and he was so bent on avoiding heroic and romantic errors, on choosing facts to fit his theories of heredity and what not, that he directed his attention to what was brutal and sordid. His long series of novels, the *Histoire naturelle et sociale d'une famille sous le second empire* (for he had Balzac's example of continuity fresh before him), purports to describe the history of a family of French peasants, the Rougon-Macquart, and into it he puts a prodigal amount of pathology. Zola was not complimentary to the French peasant, and one cannot but surmise that there was a touch of patriotic indignation in the critics who belabored the author. Brunetière denied that Zola's peasants were

French; Lanson says, "*On n'a rien à dire, sinon que ce sont des brutes ou des fous.*" The Academy would not admit him. Nevertheless, the public felt his power. And assuredly there is a great sweep in his descriptive passages, and he presents the confused embroilments of masses of men, crowds, strikes, riots, in most vivid fashion. *L'Assommoir* ("The Bludgeon"), the story of a Parisian workman, and *Germinal*, that of a miner, are reputed to be the best. The *Débâcle*, the story of the defeat of 1870, is a very powerful book; it puts before your eyes the ruthless crushing, by a mighty military machine, of ill-contrived obstacles put hastily in its way. His novels *Rome* and *Lourdes*, in which he handled the Church without gloves, called forth ecclesiastical wrath. But Zola was of his generation, and his great contemporary fame now shines like a far-away light, shrouded more and more by the smoke of years.

Another novelist, Alphonse Daudet (1840-1897), a native of Nîmes, is far more sympathetic. He was an artist of a delicate sensibility and a tender sense of the pathos of life, and even when he meant to do as Zola did and describe life brutally, he did not. The facts he tells pass through his compassion, as through glass, and acquire a tender softness. Sometimes his books are sad, like *Le petit chose*, or *Jack*, — one catches an echo of Dickens, — but he is rollickingly gay in *Tartarin de Tarascon*. The book to read, however, is *Lettres de mon moulin* (1869), which contains *L'Arlésienne*, the germ of the story that Bizet (1838-1875) converted into the opera, and made a success second only to *Carmen*.

Other novelists once eminent, much read, much talked of, are now walking the great road that leads to oblivion — the entertaining Cherbuliez (1829-1899), the sentimental Georges Ohnet (1848-1918), the amusing Edmond About

(1828-1885). Edmond de Goncourt (1822-1896) and his brother Jules (1830-1870) also considered themselves novelists. Their real importance lay in their subtle intelligence, which touched many matters of literature and art. Their books on the eighteenth century, on the painters, on Marie-Antoinette, on Madame de Pompadour, are delightful, and showed people how charming that century was, and they were pioneers in the discovery of Japanese art. They were like two little, smutty, intellectual insects gathering — certainly not always honey — out of the objects that interested them; they were very cultivated, stimulated intellectual curiosity, and fashioned taste for those that wished to be within the inner circles of appreciation; they corrected or castigated the ignorances of the vulgar. Their journal, when first published, was in great vogue. Judged by the standards, let us say, of Concord, Massachusetts, the *Journal* is coarse and odious; but whether you agree with Concord or not, it is interesting. And there was an element of human kindness in Edmond, the surviving brother. The two had made a collection of *objets d'art* of all sorts, bric-a-brac, curios, knickknacks, the fruit of study, search, and research, of ripened taste and cultivated judgment, and in his will the survivor provided that this collection should be sold at auction, and that no two pieces should be sold to the same bidder, but all be scattered to the four quarters of heaven, so that, as he said, others coming after him might enjoy the very same sweetness of pursuit and capture that he and his brother had enjoyed.

But among all these writers the fame of supreme craftsmanship has been accorded to Guy de Maupassant, Flaubert's godson. From Flaubert, Maupassant learned much. He puts himself, his sympathies, his likes and dislikes, quite out of sight, and looks at the object he

describes with as severe impersonality as is humanly possible. Some readers may like a novel, or a story, that is saturated with the author's personality; but Maupassant regarded such readers as negligible. What he essayed to do he did supremely well. He chose his words with the most meticulous precision, and he puts the happening that he tells of in the very room where you are reading. Some of his stories concern themselves purely with the brute in man, and it is hardly possible not to feel that he was cold-blooded, with stuff in him that poisoners are made of; but he became the fashion, and ever since has been cried up as the supreme master of the short story. Not since Boccaccio has there been such unanimity of praise for a story-teller.

Paul Bourget (*b.* 1852) wrote *Le Disciple* in the prime of his manhood, and to some people it remains his most interesting book. It depicts the effect of a creed (not the Christian) on the human heart. There is great dexterity in his analysis of moods and motives. All his books are subject to the criticism that they call forth but one epithet — that they are psychological. Of course, every novel is psychological, but readers are not unanimous in uniting upon the word unless there is a savor of textbooks, professors, and laboratories. When characters are analyzed so minutely, and their springs of action so clearly explained, the author is dealing with manikins, not men.

Pierre Loti (1850–1923), a seaman, won his early great renown by the *Pêcheur d'Islande*, a book of rare and sentimental beauty, which suggests a little the painter Carrière, for he spread a delicate haze of romantic imagining over the story, in rhetoric scarcely equaled by Hawthorne, and of which there has not been the like in France since Chateaubriand. Pathos, beauty, the *sunt lacrimæ rerum*, pervade his books about Breton sailors; and his stories

of Japan, though less sympathetic, perhaps, are equally delicate.

Of the later group of novelists, Anatole France (1844-1924) is admittedly the first, not that he excels or even equals Maupassant as a craftsman, nor Loti in delicate sentiment or in poetic expression, but because of a greater humanity than the first and a firmer grasp of life than the second. *La Rôtisserie de la reine Pédauque* has masterly passages, the Abbé Coignard is the best picaresque character since Shakespeare, and the volumes that deal with his youth, *Le petit Pierre*, *Le Livre de mon ami*, *La Vie en fleur*, *Pierre Nozière*, present the charm of infancy seen through the veil of years by a wise and kindly eye. In such manner all of us look back on boyhood, but we are dumb, and Anatole France has been able to give expression to our feelings. His other books have a great deal of what the French call *l'esprit gaulois*, with — as Concord would think — the grossness of indecency very scantily draped in humor. His style is admirably clear, with irony of the highest excellence, so much so that it was long considered the perfection of French prose, until the present generation of French writers, swayed by reaction and the need of not admiring what the past generation admired, affects to call it banal. As I say, he is at times gross to dullness, like stagnant and stinking water, and yet when one comes upon his real affections — a love of Paris, a love of Racine, a tenderness for innocence — one forgets it all, in great gratitude for so much that is delightful in his books.

I have left myself little space for critics or poets. Of the first the most scholarly is Brunetière (1849-1906), who set before himself the task of treating literature objectively, after a scientific fashion, and with definite standards of social and moral values. He set all French writers in



their proper niches in the temple of Fame. He was editor of the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, very industrious, prolific, and pugnacious. He is what in academic circles is considered sound, solid, and safe, a respecter of authority and tradition, and a staunch Roman Catholic. He was, no doubt, excellent and necessary. Émile Faguet (1847-1916) was more of an analyst, more concerned with showing you what he himself found than in determining an author's place in the hierarchy of literature. He was a professor at the Sorbonne, and has written so copiously, so very copiously, that you can find out what he thinks (and you will be doing well) on who is who throughout French literature.

Jules Lemaître (1853-1914) is somewhat of the same sort, with a lighter touch, and, like Faguet, interested rather to let you know his impressions than to set a hall-mark on books, a clever, very cultivated, kindly man, gifted with acumen, irony, and wit, as you will see by his six little volumes *Les Contemporains*, admirable books to read at a solitary repast. Francisque Sarcey (1827-1899) was a theatrical critic, and his *Quarante ans de théâtre* is very pleasant and entertaining, though much of it concerns Scribe (1791-1861) and Sardou (1831-1908), playwrights of purely temporary interest. Critics are usually pleasant reading, but not to be taken too seriously, for literature should be a personal adventure, an affair of tête-à-tête, where any third person is an intruder.

In poetry, José-Maria de Heredia (1842-1905), who was born in Cuba, is the last of the *Parnassiens*, lovers of form and precision. His little book of a hundred sonnets, *Les Trophées*, appeared in 1893 amid universal applause. These sonnets are cast in metal, inlaid with silver and gold, sonorous and flawless; they sound like an Amen to Théophile Gautier's familiar poem:

*Tout passe. — L'art robuste  
 Seul a l'éternité,  
 Le buste  
 Survit à la cité.*

After him reaction turned poets to quite an opposite course, and the *symbolistes* held sway during the last twenty years of the century. Political events appear to have exercised no influence on literature, not the Second Empire as such, not the terrible War of 1870, not the Commune of 1871 nor the Third Republic. Of the *symbolistes* Stéphane Mallarmé (1842-1898) and Paul Verlaine (1844-1896) are the two masters. It has been said that "all the art of Verlaine is in bringing verse to a bird's song," which sounds to me not a eulogy but a severe criticism; nevertheless, a bird's song, if unable to express human thoughts, awakens many human emotions, and suggests unutterable things. "Description is banished that beautiful things may be evoked, magically; the regular beat of verse is broken in order that words may fly, upon subtler wings." The movement is a "revolt against exteriority, against rhetoric, against a materialistic tradition," with an "endeavor to disengage the ultimate essence, the soul, of whatever exists and be realized by the consciousness"; it is a "dutiful waiting upon every symbol by which the soul of things can be made visible, so that literature may at last attain liberty and authentic speech."

Mr. Arthur Symons, whose words I have quoted, traces the symbolist movement to Gérard de Nerval, little known to the Philistine, except for a charming anecdote. One day he was seen leading a lobster, on the leash of a blue ribbon, across the courtyard of the Palais-Royal. His friends expressed their surprise. "Yes," he answered, "I

like it; it does not bark and knows the secrets of the sea." The poor fellow lost his wits and hanged himself.

Mallarmé is undoubtedly obscure, very obscure; even the French find him *un auteur difficile*, and it would be quite out of place here to try to appreciate his one little volume of verse and his one little volume of prose. Symons has compared his poetry to a veil of cloud, thick and dark towards the many, and shining silver towards the few. I content myself with quoting his to me least unintelligible poem:

*La lune s'attristait. Des séraphins en pleurs  
Rêvant, l'archet aux doigts, dans le calme des fleurs  
Vaporeuses, tiraient de mourantes violes  
De blancs sanglots glissant sur l'azur des corolles.  
C'était le jour béni de ton premier baiser,  
Ma songerie aimant à me martyriser  
S'enivrant savamment du parfum de tristesse  
Que même sans regret et sans déboire laisse  
La cueillaison d'un Rêve au cœur qui l'a cueilli.  
F'errai donc, l'œil rivé sur le pavé vieilli,  
Quand, avec du soleil aux cheveux, dans la rue  
Et dans le soir, tu m'es en riant apparue  
Et j'ai cru voir la fée au chapeau de clarté  
Qui jadis sur mes beaux sommeils d'enfant gâté  
Passait, laissant toujours de ses mains mal fermées  
Neiger de blancs bouquets d'étoiles parfumées.*

The movement did not use the symbol for a new idea, nor in allegory; it had a much wider significance — it meant liberty, the throwing overboard of old formulas and restraints, and the *vers libre* enabled the poet to express more exactly, more delicately, the shifting sensations of the spirit. No school starts into being unaffected by an earlier school, and in like manner as the naturalists were imbued with romanticism, so, at least according to Remy

de Gourmont, both Mallarmé and Verlaine were originally *Parnassiens*, as they show by their love of form, though of a kind so different from the form of the *Parnassiens*, and then underwent the influence of Baudelaire — that is, as one finds Baudelaire in these verses :

*La nature est un temple où de vivants piliers  
Laissent parfois de confuses paroles;  
L'homme y passe à travers des forêts de symboles  
Qui l'observent avec des regards familiers.*

Mallarmé wandered through a forest of symbols and he was not clear, but he did not mean to be clear; he suggests perfumes, colors, sounds, edges of thoughts, for he desires to arouse emotions, not to communicate ideas. One critic says that he has certain verses that if isolated, and accompanied by a gloss, show a singular beauty.

Verlaine was a greater poet than Mallarmé. He was a *symboliste* because it was his nature to express himself like a singing child, whereas Mallarmé was full of theory. Some of Verlaine's verses are most musical, and barely more than music; not more musical, however, to English ears, than Tennyson, or Coleridge, or Spenser. Everybody knows the stanza :

*Les sanglots longs  
Des violons  
De l'automne  
Blessent mon cœur  
D'une langueur  
Monotone.*

In life he was half child, half satyr. His biography is a brief record of drink, lust, prison, hospital, debauch, and mysticism, and yet in spite of this, or because of this, his soul is floating high in delicate imaginings, in emotional

memories, in mystic passion, as if it were an aerial creature attached by a fatal cord to something rotten in a fen below. Rarely has genius been more vulgarly housed; his spirit and his body are as Ariel and Sycorax.

Such a movement as *symbolisme* cannot endure for long; in twenty-five years it fulfills its task, and the expression of thought, the large enjoyment of external reality, return to their place of human importance. Of poets living I shall not speak; not of Paul Claudel, who is said to make the most strenuous efforts to "uncover the invisible without subjecting it to the vulgar light of the visible, and to formulate the ineffable without degrading it by the everyday intelligibility of language," nor of the comtesse de Noailles, who possesses great gifts of passionate feeling and a genius of expression.

Of novelists there have been a plenty: Maurice Barrès the passionate nationalist; Huysmans, the Zolaesque mystic; Jules Renard, author of the delightful *Poil de carotte*; Marcel Prévost, who writes of things feminine; the weird Frères Rosny; Marcelle Tinayre, a promising talent that proved disappointing; and so on. But head and shoulders above them stands the most important French novelist since Flaubert, Marcel Proust. He is still recent enough on the field of controversy to justify my saying nothing here beyond the fact that in his hands you hear the human heart tick. He stands with his stethoscope and counts the throbs, healthy, languid, jerky, hesitant, or impulsive, and then examines with equally meticulous care the other human organs. The failing that causes him to fall below the highest rank is a certain thinness of vitality in himself, a profound lack of deep interest in life; his nerves register most delicately, but at the bottom of his heart lies cold indifference. His early death was a great loss.



In the field of drama there is no one that can compare with Proust for talents; Hervieu is intelligent, Brioux very moral, Donnay rather vulgar, Capus amusing, Flers and Caillavet entertaining, Rostand, who conferred a real boon upon his fellows by the brilliant and delightful *Cyrano de Bergerac*, is a charming versifier, Henri Bataille and Bernstein are clever, but narrow in their interests, and Sacha Guitry owes the larger part of his reputation to his charming wife, Yvonne Printemps. But in a little volume like this, an enumeration of all the men of talent in literature becomes like Homer's catalogue of the ships that sailed from Aulis to Troy — a passage which every reader skips.

## XXXVIII

### THE END

THE victories of the Marne and of Verdun, however, were far from winning the war. All Europe joined in the mêlée — Turkey, Italy, Bulgaria, Roumania, Greece; men fought in Asia and in Africa, and on every ocean of the globe. In France the Allies made a successful advance (battle of the Somme, June–September 1916), and the next year another great offensive was attempted, but it failed to pass the Hindenburg line. The French losses were enormous. In March 1917 the Russian revolution took place and left Germany virtually free in the east; and, though the United States declared war in April, time was needed before its aid could become effective. France began to show signs of exhaustion. The vitality of the army was lowered; it became exposed to evil influences. Red radicals, syndicalists, socialists, partisans of pacificism, sent pamphlets, tracts, newspapers, to the soldiers. Cries of “*Vive la paix!*” were heard, and in May mutiny broke out. Some troops refused to go to the trenches; others wished to march on Paris and found soviets after the example of the Russians. The heroic effort the nation had made had begun to tell, and the prospect looked dark. General Nivelle, who had succeeded Joffre as commander-in-chief (December 1916), was judged responsible for the failure of the last offensive, and was replaced by Pétain (May 16, 1917). Pétain justified the government’s choice. He went through the army from division to division, investigating and comforting. It was necessary to shoot a score of mutineers, but that was all. Words of encour-

agement and appreciation, decorations, leaves of absence, did the rest, and the fighting spirit of the army was restored. But outside the army similar attempts were made to induce the nation to throw up the sponge. *Défaitistes*, persons ready and willing to accept peace at the price of surrender, tried in all sorts of ways to end the war on any terms. But the nation showed its spirit; Clemenceau was made prime minister. *Le petit tigre* roared royally: "*Plus de campagnes pacifistes, plus de menées allemandes! Ni trahison, ni demi-trahison! La guerre! Rien que la guerre!*"

France had stiffened her upper lip. In January 1918 Lloyd George stated that England would support France's claim to Alsace-Lorraine to the death, and President Wilson promulgated his Fourteen Points. The Germans replied by a desperate offensive. They attacked in the neighborhood of Cambrai with great success (March-April); they broke through the British lines and advanced forty miles. By June they had reached a line from Reims to Château-Thierry, scarce fifty miles from Paris, they had passed Soissons, and were close upon Compiègne. The danger looked as grim as before the battle of the Marne. But real coöperation had now been effected; Foch was put in supreme command of the united French and British armies (March 26), and by June 13 the great drive of the Crown Prince was definitely stopped. Once more the Germans attacked (July 15); but the tide turned, and three days later the Allies assumed the offensive. Great battles were fought in August and September. American troops had now come in large numbers, and this new reservoir of men made it plain to all where victory lay. The whole German line was swept back, the Allies following in hot pursuit, until at last Germany was exhausted and forced to yield. On November 11 the

Armistice was signed. France had lost 1,383,000 men killed, 2,800,000 wounded, while Germany's dead numbered 1,822,545.

But, alas, victory and an end of killing and destroying are not the prelude to serenity and happiness. The poor mutilated nations that had conquered expected their enemies' surrender to bring a medicinal magic with it that would repair all devastation, right all wrongs, heal all wounds, and comfort the bereaved. All eyes were turned to the conference of peace where the representatives of the twenty-seven Allies met to consider how all appetites should be satisfied. The four principal Powers, France, Great Britain, the United States, and Italy, formed an inner group which controlled the decisions. There was President Wilson, calm, stately, academic, with his formulæ in favor of nationalities, of small countries, of just boundaries and a league of nations; there was Lloyd George, brilliantly persuasive without seeming to persuade; there was Clemenceau with his unparalleled experience in the ways that lead to getting one's own way.

On the twenty-eighth of June, 1919, at the Château de Versailles, in the *Galerie des Glaces*, where King William of Prussia had been crowned Emperor of Germany, the German plenipotentiaries signed the Treaty of Versailles. Alsace-Lorraine was to return to France; the Allies should occupy the left bank of the Rhine and the bridgeheads for a period that might last fifteen years, or more if Germany failed to fulfill her obligations under the treaty; France, in return for her destroyed mines, was to take possession of the basin of the Sarre, and that territory was to be under the political control of an Allied commission for fifteen years, and then the inhabitants were to decide whether they preferred to belong to Germany or to France. Germany was to pay for all the damage caused to the civilian

population, and a Commission of Reparation was established to determine the amount of damages and to devise a plan of payment. The map of Europe was rearranged, a League of Nations was agreed upon, and everyone went away in discontent.

A period of lassitude, uncertainty, and confused proposals followed. Many soldiers back from the hardships of the trenches felt that they had a right to ease and amusement; others found that women had taken their economic places in civil life; the women proposed to keep the new independence acquired during the war; the national debts were enormous; taxes were near the breaking point, and production was stunted; rumors were spread abroad that Germany was secretly preparing for revenge; the new states, Poland, Jugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, protégés of France, were an expensive care; the United States would not come into the League of Nations; the value of the franc went down—in short, almost everything contributed its portion to the great burden of depression. But *la France est immortelle*; she had passed through worse places, during the Hundred Years' War, during the Wars of Religion, during the Revolution, and even now, devastated, wounded, maimed, she lifts her drooping head

and with new-spangled ore  
Flames in the forehead of the morning sky.

France is immortal because she is one of the primary needs of our Western world. To us in America, life without France would be a much poorer thing; we need so much that France gives us. There is Paris, the queen of cities, spreading her beauty from the fairy domes of the Sacré-Cœur on the height of Montmartre, southward to the statued pleasance of the Luxembourg gardens and



westward to the heroic monument of imperial France, the Arc de Triomphe, where on dark summer nights one can still hear the ghostly tramp of grenadiers back from Arcole, from Marengo, back from the Pyramids, from Aboukir, from Austerlitz, from Jena, from Friedland and Eylau, from Badajoz, from Vitoria, from Borodino and Moscow, from Leipzig, from Waterloo, conquerors or defeated, carrying their heads high, and their eagles triumphant. And down below, the silvery Seine, gliding like the glittering serpent at Athena's feet, reflects palaces and plane trees, from the Île Saint-Louis, past la Cité, past the Institut and the statue of Voltaire, past the Louvre, *ciselé comme un joyau*, past the Quai Voltaire, the Quai d'Orsay, the Pont Alexandre, down to the Pont d'Iéna, which unites the gardens of the Trocadéro with those of the Champ-de-Mars, and onward to the sea, carrying upon its back as the sun goes down the loveliest silvery grays flecked with a thousand colors. Who does not love the borders of the Seine, the quais, the boulevards? Anatole France says: "*C'est là que je sens pour mon pays le plus tendre et le plus ingénieux amour. C'est là qu'il m'apparaît clairement que la mission de Paris est d'enseigner le monde. De ces pavés de Paris, qui se sont tant de fois soulevés pour la justice et la liberté, ont jailli les vérités qui consolent et délivrent.*"

America needs, too, the wines of France, for the rich traditions of social life that have come down the centuries from Ithaca and the palace of Alcinous, from Athens and Cana, find nowadays their fullest and most agreeable expression at French tables under the stimulus of those wines whose names sound like verses of Verlaine: clos Vougeot, Chambertin, Pommard, Beaune, Mercurey, Romanée, Château-Lafite, Château Margaux, Château Haut Brion, Château Yquem, Château La Tour du Pin

Figeac Mouré, Perrier Jouet, Pomery and Greno, Veuve Cliquot, Châteauneuf du Pape, Grand vin d'Anjou, Jurançon, Cognac.

We Americans, also, know little of the art of conversation, although it is conversation that raises men above the beasts; and of the art of conversation the table is the cradle and school; it is the provoker of mirth, the comforter of friendship, and requires not only wine but also the culinary art. What a breaker-down of our shy inhibitions and our boorish silences is a journey through the French provinces, stopping for lunch and dinner at an inn to partake of the *spécialité de la maison*: *Timbale de homard, Canard à l'orange, Friture de goujons, Rognons cocotte, Crêpes pralinées, Escalopes au chablis, Poulet flambé à la fine, Andouillette grillée, Terrine de lapin truffé*. This is not gormandizing; it is walking up *l'escalier d'honneur* of civilization.

We need the arts of France, for Paris is the central spot where artists from all Europe congregate to struggle with new forms to fit new sensibilities and new experiences, where an idea is esteemed more than gold and an emotion more than fine gold, where personality is treated with respect and idiosyncrasy is not a matter of ridicule. We need the literature of France, for nowhere as in Paris are the relative values of tradition and originality so delicately adjusted, nowhere is discipline of the mind so honored as an end in itself.

And we need, theology apart, with our two hundred and forty-one sects, with our provincial attitude towards religion, to come into contact with the great stream of Christian tradition which has its main current in France, where religion, as accepted by intelligent men, is not a set of beliefs, but an observance of forms hallowed by tender associations, a cultivation of sentiment, and a

liberation of the spirit. Who goes into the cathedrals of Chartres, of Reims, of Bourges, or the church at Carcassonne, or the little sanctuary of Saint-Michel perched on the Rocher d'Aiguilhe, without a clearer understanding of what the traditions of religion are, the communion with saints of the past, and the mysticism of holiness?

It is in these higher reaches of the spirit that we need France most; we need familiarity with that intertwined skein of ideas, sentiments, hopes and joys, that enabled Joan of Arc to see her visions, and Saint Louis to be both a king and a saint, that enabled the men of revolutionary times to believe in the brotherhood of man, and the France of our day to carry through the Great War. And to understand the spirit of France, one must know France.

All that a little book like this can do is to serve as a rude signpost to roads that lead towards such an understanding.

## INDEX





## INDEX

- ABADIE, PAUL**, architect, 377  
**Abélard**, 48, 49  
**Aboukir**, battles of, 310  
**About**, Edmond, 380  
**Académie Française**, 184, 185, 194, 308  
**Academies**, the, 187, 214, 308  
**Adam de la Halle**, poet, 67  
**Agadir**, incident of, 360  
**Agincourt**, battle of, 100, 101  
**Aiglon**, l', birth, 315  
**Aiguesmortes**, 62  
**Aix (Aquæ Sextiæ)**, 7  
**Aix-la-Chapelle**, Treaty of, 235, 236  
**Albigenses**, crusade against, 56, 57  
**Albret**, Jeanne d', of Navarre, 156  
**Alcuin of York**, 27  
**Alembert**, Jean le Rond d', mathematician, 237, 242, 250, 262  
**Alesia**, 8  
**Algéciras**, conference at, 359  
**Algiers**, becomes French province, 319  
**Alix**, daughter of Eleanor of Aquitaine, 51  
**Allier**, the, 3  
**Allobroges**, Gallic tribe, 7  
**Alma**, battle of, 330  
**Alsace**, goes to France (1648), 190; ceded to Germany (1871), 348, 361; returned to France (1919), 392  
**Amboise**, 132, 133, 137; Pacification of, 159  
**Amboise**, Cardinal Georges d', 134, 135  
**Amboise**, Abbot Jacques d', 134  
**American Revolution**, 268, 269  
**Amiens**, raided by Norsemen (Normans), 29; Peace of, 312; captured (1870), 347  
**Amiot, Jacques**, his translation of Plutarch, 168  
**Anagni**, Pope made prisoner at, 71, 74  
**Ancre**, Maréchal d', *see* Concini  
**Anet**, Château d', 166  
**Angers**, sacked by Norsemen (Normans), 29  
**Angers**, David d', sculptor, 335  
**Anglas**, Boissy d', 305  
**Angoumois**, province, 39  
**Anjou**, 36-38  
**Anjou**, Duke of, 90  
**Anjou**, Henri d', brother of Charles IX, 159, 160. *See also* Henri III  
**Anne d'Autriche**, wife of Louis XIII, 174, 188, 195  
**Anne de Beaujeu**, 128-130  
**Anne of Bretagne**, 130, 132, 133, 137, 139  
**Aquitaine**, province, 38  
**Aquitainians**, 6  
**Architecture**, Romanesque, 38, 39, 46-50; Gothic, 47-50; change in, from the twelfth to the fifteenth century, 96, 97; Gothic and Renaissance, mingling of, 134, 135; under Richelieu, 187; under Louis XIV, 214-219; under Louis XV, 242; of style *Louis XVI*, 260; modern, 377, 378  
**Argenson**, comte d', minister of foreign affairs, 246  
**Arianism** and **Athanasianism**, 12, 15  
**Ariovistus**, German chieftain, 8  
**Arles**, council of bishops convoked at, 12; captured by Saracens, 29; arena at, 45; Saint-Gilles-du-Gard and Saint-Trophime at, 45  
**Armagnacs**, 99, 103-105  
**Arnauld**, Antoine, philosopher, 197  
**Arnauld**, Jacqueline Marie, 198  
**Arouet**, Maître François, father of Voltaire, 251  
**Arques**, battle of, 166  
**Arthur**, Prince, nephew of King John, 47  
**Artois**, 33, 34; seized by Louis XI, 128

- Arverni, Gallic tribe, 7  
*Assemblée Constituante*, 291  
*Assemblée Législative*, 291  
*Assemblée Nationale*, 278-286, 290, 291  
 Athanasianism and Arianism, 12, 15  
 Attila, defeated near Châlons, 13  
 Aubanel, Joseph, Provençal poet, 45  
 Aubigny, Constant d', 195  
 Auerstädt, battle of, 315  
 Augereau, Pierre François Charles, Marshal, 309, 310, 314  
 Augier, Guillaume Victor Émile, dramatist, 340  
 Augsburg, War of League of, 224  
 Aurelius, Marcus, Emperor, 9-11  
 Austerlitz, battle of, 314  
 Austrasia, 16  
 Austria, and Prusia, 344. *See also* Great War  
 Austrian Succession, War of, 235  
 Auvergnat, Provençal dialect, 45  
 Auvergne, 39, 40  
 Avignon, transference of seat of Papacy to, 72, 92  
 Azay-le-Rideau, Château of, 137
- BABEUF, FRANÇOIS ÉMILE, revolutionist, 309  
 Baïf, Jean Antoine de, poet, 152  
 Bailly, Jean Sylvain, astronomer, in French Revolution, 278-282, 286, 290, 303  
 Balue, Jean de la, Cardinal, 127  
 Balzac, Honoré de, 327  
 Bank of France, established by Napoleon, 312  
 Banville, Théodore Faullain de, poet, 206  
 Barnave, Antoine Pierre Joseph Marie, revolutionist, 278, 303  
 Barons, profit by inroads of Norsemen, 29  
 Barras, Paul François Jean Nicolas, comte de, revolutionist, 308, 309, 310  
 Barrès, Maurice, novelist, 388  
 Barrot, Camille Hyacinthe Odilon, statesman, 320
- Barthélemy, François, marquis de, 310  
 Barthou, prime minister, 361  
 Barye, Antoine Louis, sculptor, 335, 375  
 Basques, 5, 7, 17  
 Bastien-Lepage, Jules, painter, 374  
 Bastille, taking of, 281  
 Bataille, Henri, dramatist, 389  
 Baudelaire, Charles, poet, 340, 341, 387  
 Bayard, Chevalier, 133  
 Bayeux tapestries, 35  
 Bayle, Pierre, philosopher, 228  
 Bazaine, François Achille, Marshal, surrenders Metz, 347  
 Beaugé, battle of, 105  
 Beauharnais, Hortense, 322  
 Beauharnais, Josephine, wife of Napoleon, 309; Empress, 314; divorced, 315  
 Beaumarchais, Pierre Augustin Caron de, 262, 263, 268  
 Beauneveu, André, sculptor, 96  
 Bedford, Duke of, 106, 107, 111  
 Béjart, Madeleine, and Molière, 199, 200  
 Belgæ, 6  
 Belgium, in wars of Louis XIV, 193; violated by Germany, 363  
 Belleau, Remy, poet, 152  
 Bergerac, Cyrano de, 187, 195, 389  
 Bernadotte, Jean Baptiste Jules, Marshal, 314, 315  
 Bernard, Claude, physiologist, 337  
 Bernard de Ventadour, 42, 51, 52  
 Bernhardt, Sarah, 328  
 Bernini, Giovanni Lorenzo, 218, 219  
 Bernstein, Henry, dramatist, 389  
 Berry, Duke of, uncle of Charles VI, 96, 99, 100; his *Book of Hours*, 96  
 Berry, Duke of, son of comte d'Artois, murdered, 318  
 Berthelot, Gilles, Azay-le-Rideau built by, 137  
 Berthier, Louis Alexandre, Marshal, 314, 315  
 Bertrand de Born, troubadour, 52  
 Bertrand de Got, archbishop of Bordeaux, 72. *See also* Clement V

- Beyle, Henri (Stendhal), novelist, 327  
 Bèze, Théodore de, 103  
 Billaud-Varenne, Jean Nicolas, revolutionist, 306  
 Birague, Cardinal de, 151  
 Biron, Maréchal de, 172  
 Bishops, Gallic, 11, 12; council of, at Arles, 12  
 Bismarck, Otto von, 345, 346, 348  
 Bizet, Alexandre C. L. (called Georges), his opera *Carmen*, 380  
 Black Death, *see* Bubonic plague  
 Black Prince, at battle of Crécy, 77; his forays, 80, 81; at the battle of Poitiers, 82-84; death, 93  
 Blanc, Louis, communistic notions of, 321  
 Blanche of Castile, 58-60  
 Blanqui, Louis Auguste, socialistic revolutionist, 348  
 Blenheim, battle of, 226  
 Blois, sacked by Norsemen (Normans), 29; and Louis XII, 134, 135, 137; castle at, 134, 137, 164, 165; Hôtel d'Alluye, 134  
 Boccaccio, Giovanni, origin of his *Decameron*, 79  
 Bohier, Thomas, 137  
 Boileau, Nicolas, 183, 184, 203-205, 218  
 Bonaparte, Caroline, 312  
 Bonaparte, Charles, 257  
 Bonaparte, Jérôme, 315  
 Bonaparte, Joseph, 314, 315  
 Bonaparte, Lætitia, 257  
 Bonaparte, Louis, 314, 322  
 Bonaparte, Lucien, 311  
 Bonaparte, Napoleon, *see* Napoleon I  
 Boniface VIII, Pope, his quarrel with Philippe le Bel, 69-72  
 Bonnat, Léon Joseph Florentin, painter, 374  
 Bontemps, Pierre, sculptor, 151, 152  
 Bordeaux, burned by Norsemen (Normans), 29  
 Borodino, battle of, 315  
 Bossuet, Jacques Bénigne, 207, 208, 210, 227  
 Bouchardon, Edme, sculptor, 240  
 Boucher, François, painter, 237, 238, 244, 260, 302  
 Bouguereau, Adolphe William, painter, 374  
 Bouillon, duchesse de, niece of Mazarin, 205  
 Boulanger, Gen. Georges Ernest Jean Marie, 353, 354  
 Bourbon, Antoine de, 158, 159  
 Bourbon, Constable, 142  
 Bourbon, duc de, grandson of Great Condé, first minister, 233  
 Bourdichon, Jean, painter, 139  
 Bourges, cathedral of, 50, 96; roi de, 105; court of Charles VII at, 106  
 Bourget, Paul, 382  
 Bouvines, battle of, 47  
 Braddock, Edward, defeat, 246  
 Brantôme, Pierre de Bourdeilles de, historian, 168, 169  
 Brennus, Gallic chieftain, 7  
 Bretigny, Treaty of, 90  
 Brézé, Pierre de, 120  
 Briand, Aristide, 358, 360, 361  
 Brieux, Eugène, dramatist, 389  
 Brissot, Jean Pierre, revolutionist, 292, 298, 303  
 Brittany, province, 36; in Hundred Years' War, 76; united to French kingdom, 129, 130  
 Broglie, duc de, 320  
 Brosse, Salomon de, architect, 187  
 Brumaire, the 18th, *coup d' état* of, 312  
 Brunetière, Ferdinand, 379, 383  
 Brunswick, Duke of, 295, 298  
 Bubonic plague, 78, 79  
 Buch, Captal de, 82, 84, 88  
 Buckingham, George Villiers, Duke of, 179  
 Budé, Guillaume, 143, 146, 148  
 Buffon, Georges L. L., comte de, 251  
 Bullant, Jean, architect, 151, 152, 155, 168, 211  
 Bullen, Anne, 149  
 Burgoyne, John, surrender of, 268  
 Burgundians, in France, 13, 15; and Armagnacs, 99, 103-105, 112

- Burgundy, 16, 40-42; grapes of, 42;  
Flanders united to, 94; incorporated in France, 128  
Buridan, Jean, philosopher, 74  
Bury, Château de, 135  
Byron, George Gordon, Lord, 326;  
quoted, 184  
Byzantine emperors, 19, 24
- CABANEL, ALEXANDRE, painter, 374  
Caen, Abbaye-aux-Dames and Abbaye-aux-Hommes, 35; sacked, 76  
Cæsar, C. Julius, in Gaul, 6-8  
Caillaux, Joseph, 361  
Caillavet, G. de, dramatist, 389  
Calais, siege of, 77, 78; becomes English city, 78; recovered from English, 156  
Calas family, 248  
Calonne, Charles Alexandre de, controller-general, 272, 273  
Calvin, Jean, 154, 155  
Calvinism, 155  
Canada, transferred to England, 245, 246  
Capet, House of, 30, 32, 37, 46  
Capet, Hugues, 31  
Capitularies of Charlemagne, 25  
Capus, Alfred, dramatist, 389  
Caracalla, Emperor, edict of (214 A.D.), 9  
Carloman, son of Charles Martel, 18  
Carlovingians, 16-31  
Carlyle, Thomas, 260, 296, 309  
Carnot, Lazare Nicolas Marguerite, 298, 306, 309, 310  
Carnot, Pres. Marie François Sadi, 354, 355  
Carpeaux, Jean Baptiste, sculptor, 374, 375  
Carrel, Nicolas Armand, political writer, 319  
Carriera, Rosalba, 240  
Carrière, Eugène Anatole, painter, 374  
Cartesianism, 183  
Casimir-Périer, ministry of, 320  
Casimir-Périer, Pres. Jean Paul Pierre, 355  
Catalan, Provençal dialect, 45  
Cathari, the, 55  
Catholic League, 164, 166, 167  
Catholics and Huguenots, 155-168  
Cauchon, Pierre, bishop of Beauvais, 112  
Cavaignac, Godefroy, minister of war, in Dreyfus *affaire*, 357  
Cavaignac, Gen. Louis Eugène, 322  
Caves, *see* Grottoes  
Cavour, Camillo Benso, Count of, 331  
Cayeux, Colin des, 121  
Cazin, Jean Charles, painter, 367  
Cefalù, cathedral of, 35  
Celestine V, Pope, 69  
Cellini, Benvenuto, in France, 144, 145  
Celt, the term, 3  
Celtic language, 36  
Celts (Gauls), early inhabitants of France, 5, 6, 17; in Brittany, 36  
Cézanne, Paul, painter, 369, 373  
Châlons-sur-Marne, defeat of Huns near, 13, 14  
Chambord, Château de, 137, 200  
Chambord, comte de, 351, 352  
Champagne, 42  
Champagne, Philippe de, his portraits, 176, 186, 221  
Champlain, Samuel de, Quebec founded by, 179  
Champmol, chartreuse de, 97  
Chandos, Sir John, 82-84  
*Chanson de Roland*, 20-22  
Chantilly, Châtelet, 155, 211-213  
Chapu, Henri Michel Antoine, sculptor, 375, 376  
Chardin, Jean Baptiste Siméon, painter, 239  
Charlemagne, his military operations, 19; in the pass of Roncevaux, 19, 20; conquers the Lombards, 23; puts Lombard crown on own head, 23; his grant to Papacy, 23; crowned by Pope, 23; his administration, 24, 25; his Empire, 25; his wars for Christianity, 26; his interest in the clergy, 26; his interest in general culture, 27; death, 27  
Charleroi, battle of, 363  
Charles II, the Bald, 28

- Charles III, the Simple, 28, 30  
 Charles IV, 74<sup>1</sup>  
 Charles V, as Dauphin, 81, 84-90; as King, 91-94  
 Charles VI, at father's death, 94; madness of, 95, 96, 99; in Treaty of Troyes, 104; death, 105  
 Charles VII, as Dauphin and regent, 104, 105; his rival, 105; assumes title of *roi de Bourges*, 105; holds court at Bourges, 106; portrait of, 106, 118; and Jeanne d'Arc, 107-114; policy of, 115; interesting people in reign of, 115-121; at Loches, 117, 125, 137  
 Charles VIII, as Dauphin, 128; marriage, 129, 130; his campaign in Italy, 131, 132; at Amboise, 132, 137; death, 133  
 Charles IX, 158-163  
 Charles X, 318, 319  
 Charles II of England, 192  
 Charles II of Spain, 224, 225  
 Charles V, Emperor, 135, 142, 150, 153  
 Charles, son of Louis, Duke of Orleans, poet, 99, 101, 122  
 Charles of Anjou, 131  
 Charles the Bad, King of Navarre, 79-81, 85-90, 93  
 Charles the Bold of Burgundy, 94, 125-127  
 Charles the Fat, son of Louis the German, 28, 30  
 Charles Martel, 17, 18  
 Charnai, Geoffroi de, burning of, 73  
 Chartier, Alain, 98, 115, 116, 125  
 Chartres, Notre-Dame de, 49, 59, 60, 113  
 Chassériau, Théodore, painter, 326  
 Chateaubriand, François René, viscount de, 320, 326  
 Châteaubriant, Madame de, 137, 138, 144; her brothers, 142  
 Châteauroux, Madame de, 237, 240  
 Châteaux, 136-139  
 Châtillon family, 148  
 Chaumont, Château of, 134, 137  
 Chénier, André, beheaded, 303  
 Chenonceaux, Château de, 137, 151  
 Cher, the, 3; valley of, 37  
 Cherbuliez, Victor, 380  
 Chevalier, Etienne, 118  
 Childéric, son of Mérovée, 14  
 Chinon, forêt of, 37; castle of, 108, 109, 117, 136  
 Choiseul, duc de, prime minister, 257, 268  
 Chrétien de Troyes, 42, 43  
 Christianity, in the Roman Empire, 10-13; adopted by Clovis, 14; internal dissensions, under Louis XV, 246-248. *See also* Catholics; Huguenots  
 Church, and State, separation of, 358  
 Cinq-Mars, 180  
 Cistercian order, 41  
 Cîteaux, 41  
 Clairvaux, abbey of, 41  
 Clarence, Duke of, 105  
 Claude, daughter of Louis XII, 135, 137  
 Claudel, Paul, 388; quoted, 339  
 Clemenceau, Georges Eugène Benjamín, 353, 355, 357, 358, 360, 391, 392  
 Clement V, Pope, transfers seat of Papacy to Avignon, 72; dissolves Knights Templars, 73, 74  
 Clermont-Ferrand, its fame, 40; Notre-Dame-du-Port, 40, 197  
 Clodion, Claude Michel, sculptor, 260, 323  
 Cloots, Anacharsis, 304  
 Clotaire I, 15  
 Clouet, François, painter, 139, 160, 168  
 Clouet, Jean (Janet, Jehan Hay), painter, 139, 143  
 Clovis, 14, 15  
 Cluny, abbey of, 40, 48  
 Cocherel, battle of, 92  
 Code Napoléon, 312  
 Cœur, Jacques, 119-121, 124  
 Colbert, Jean Baptiste, 193, 194, 217, 222, 223; death, 226  
 Coligny, Gaspard de, Admiral, 156, 159, 160, 169



- Coligny family, 156  
 Collège de France, 154  
 Collot d'Herbois, Jean Marie, revolutionist, 306  
 Colombe, Michel, sculptor, 130, 134, 135, 139  
 Colonna, Sciarra, conspirator, 71, 72  
 Combes, Émile, 357, 358  
*Comité de Salut Public*, 300, 302, 304, 306  
*Comité de Sûreté Générale*, 304, 306  
 Commodus, Emperor, 9  
*Communards* and *Versaillais*, 350  
 Commune, Revolutionary, 282, 284, 289, 306; of 1871, 348-352  
 Commynes, Philippe de, his *Chronique de Louis XI*, 126  
 Comte, Auguste, 337  
 Concini, Concino, Florentine adventurer, 175, 176  
 Condé, Louis I, 156-158  
 Condé, Louis II, Grand Condé, 159, 163, 175, 180, 188, 194, 205, 217  
 Condillac, Étienne Bonnot d', metaphysician, 250  
 Condorcet, Marie Jean, marquis de, metaphysician, 292, 298  
*Confédération Générale du Travail*, 360  
 Confederation of the Rhine, 314  
*Conseils*, 258  
 Constant, Benjamin, novelist, 327  
 Constantine, Emperor, adopts Christianity, 12  
*Coquillarts*, 121  
 Corday, Charlotte, 302  
 Cordeliers, 289, 290  
 Corneille, Pierre, 185, 186  
 Corneille de Lyon, 168  
 Cornwallis, Lord, 269  
 Corot, Jean Baptiste Camille, 334  
 Corsica, sold to France, 257  
*Corvée*, 266  
*Cour Amoureuse, La*, 97  
 Courbet, Gustave, painter, 336  
 Coustou, Guillaume, sculptor, 240  
 Couthon, Georges, revolutionist, 302, 306  
 Coypel, Antoine, painter, 222  
 Coysevox, Antoine, sculptor, 216, 229  
 Crécy, battle of, 76, 77  
 Crefeld, battle of, 246  
 Crimean War, 330  
 Cromwell, Oliver, 192  
 Crusades, First, 40; Second, 46; Third, 56; Fourth, 56, 63, 64; against the Albigenses, 56, 57; of Saint Louis, first, 61, 62  
 Cubists, 373  
 DAGOBERT, KING, 15, 16  
 Dalou, Jules, sculptor, 375  
 Dambretycourt, Sir Eustace, 83  
 Daniel, Arnaut, troubadour, 55  
 Dante Alighieri, *Inferno*, 52; on Arnaut Daniel, 55; on conspiracy against Boniface VIII, 72  
 Danton, Georges Jacques, revolutionist, 284, 289, 291, 296-300, 304, 307  
 Daubigny, Charles François, painter, 335  
 Daudet, Alphonse, 44, 45, 380  
 Daumier, Honoré, painter, 329, 335  
 Dauphin, the name, 81  
 Dauphiné, 81  
 David, Louis, painter, 323, 324  
 Davout, Louis Nicolas, Marshal, 314  
 Decius, Emperor, 12  
 Degas, Edgar, 369  
 Delacroix, Ferdinand Victor Eugène, painter, 325  
 Delcassé, Théophile, 359  
 Delorme, Philibert, architect, 151, 152, 166, 168  
 Denmark, duchies ceded by, 333  
 Derain, painter, 373  
 Descartes, René, 48, 183, 228  
 Desmoulins, Camille, 280, 284, 291, 304, 307  
 Desmoulins, Lucille, 304  
 Despiau, Charles, sculptor, 377  
 Des Ursins, Guillaume Jouvenel, portrait of, 118, 126  
 Diane de Poitiers, 148-152, 156, 157, 166  
 Diaz, Narcisse Virgile, painter, 334  
 Diderot, Denis, 249, 250  
 Dijon, 97  
 Diocletian, Emperor, 10

- Directory, 308-312  
 Dolet, Étienne, 146  
 Donnay, Maurice, dramatist, 389  
 Dorat, Jean, poet, 152  
 Doumergue, Gaston, prime minister, 361  
 Dreyfus Case, 355-357  
 Druids, 9  
 Drusus, his campaign against Germany, 9  
 Dual Alliance, 355  
 Du Barry, Madame, 117, 230, 238, 256, 259, 260, 261, 264, 303  
 Du Bellay, Joachim, poet and statesman, 148, 152  
 Dubois, Abbé, 231, 233  
 Ducos, Roger, 312  
 Du Châtelet, Madame, 252  
 Du Deffand, Madame, 242  
 Du Guesclin, Bertrand, 92, 93  
 Dumas, Alexandre, 181, 327  
 Dumas, Alexandre,  *fils* , 340  
 Dumonstiers, the, painters, 168  
 Dumouriez, Charles François, 293, 294, 299-301  
 Dunkirk, 269  
 Dunois, bastard brother to Charles of Orléans, 110, 111, 120  
 Duplex, Joseph François, Marquis, 236  
 Dupré, Jules, painter, 335  
  
 ECKERMANN, JOHANN PETER, 220, 271  
*Écorcheurs*, 114, 120  
 Edward I of England, Philippe le Bel's war with, 69  
 Edward II of England, 69, 74  
 Edward III of England, claims French crown, 69, 75, 76; assumes title and heraldic arms of King of France, 76; in Hundred Years' War, 76-78; in Treaty of Bretigny, 90; death, 93  
 Edward VII of England, 359  
 Éginhard, biographer of Charlemagne, 27  
 Églantine, Fabre d', poet, 305  
 Egypt, Napoleon's attempt on, 310; English in control, 359  
 Elba, 316  
 Eleanor, sister of Charles V (Emperor), 143  
 Eleanor of Aquitaine, 37, 38, 42, 43, 46, 51  
 Elizabeth of Austria, wife of Charles IX, 160  
 Empire, First, 314, 316, 330; Second, 323, 330-347  
 Ems dispatch, 346  
 Enamel, workers in, 140, 168  
 Enghein, duc d', execution of, 313  
 England, Norman Conquest, 35-37; Taillebourg, 63; claims of Edward III to French crown, 75, 76; in Hundred Years' War, 76-120; Crécy, 76, 77; siege of Calais, 77, 78; Poitiers, 81-84; Agincourt, 100, 101; Treaty of Bretigny, 90; siege of Orléans, 107-113; aids Huguenots, 179; in War of League of Augsburg, 224; in War of Spanish Succession, 226; seizes Gibraltar, 226; secures Canada and India, 245, 246; in Fachoda incident, 358, 359; at Algeciras conference, 359. *See also* Great War  
 Entragues, Henriette d', 171  
 Espinay family, 137  
 Estaing, Charles Hector, comte d', 269  
 Esterhazy, Major, in Dreyfus *affaire*, 356, 357  
 Estrées, Gabrielle d', 167, 169-171  
 Étampes, Madame d', 138, 145  
 Étapes, Lefèvre d', 143, 148, 154  
 Eudes, comte de Paris, 30  
 Eugénie, Empress, 323, 342, 346, 347  
 Eustache de Saint-Pierre, 78  
  
 FACHODA, 358  
 Faguet, Émile, historian of literature, 384  
 Falconet, Étienne Maurice, sculptor, 240, 260  
 Falguière, Jean Alexandre Joseph, sculptor, 375  
 Fallières, Pres. Clément Armand, 358  
 Faure, Pres. François Félix, 355

- Favre, Jules, 334, 347, 350  
*Félibrige*, the, 45  
 Fénelon, François de La Mothe, 208–211, 223, 228  
 Ferdinand of Aragon, 130, 133  
 Ferdinand VII of Spain, 318  
 Ferney, Château of, 252  
 Ferrara, Duchess of, 149, 156  
 Feudal system, 25, 32  
 Feuillants, 291–294, 298  
 Field of the Cloth of Gold, 139  
 Fintin-Latour, Henri Ignace Théodore, painter, 367  
 Flanders, 33, 34, 76, 94  
 Flandrin, Jean Hippolyte, painter, 326  
 Flaubert, Gustave, novelist, 337, 339, 340  
 Flers, R. de, dramatist, 389  
 Fleury, André Hercule, Cardinal and statesman, 233–235, 244  
 Flourens, 348  
 Foch, Ferdinand, 391  
 Foix, Gaston (III) de, at Poitiers, 88  
 Foix, Gaston de, duc de Nemours, at Ravenna, 133  
 Fontainebleau, Château of, 138  
 Fontainebleau, School of, 138, 140  
 Fontanges, Mlle de, 227  
 Fontenelles, Bernard le Bovier de, 228  
 Fontenoy, battle of, 235  
 Fouché, Joseph, head of police, 313  
 Fouquet, Jean, paintings of, 106, 118, 126, 139; his journey to Rome, 118, 119  
 Fouquet, Nicolas, finance minister, 192, 193, 195, 200, 202, 215, 222  
 Fouquier-Tinville, public prosecutor, 303, 304  
 Fourier, François Marie Charles, socialist, 321  
 Fourteen Points, 391  
 Fragonard, Jean Honoré, painter, 260, 261, 323  
 France, beauty of, 3; boundaries of, 3; rivers of, 3; the variety of, 4–6; early inhabitants of, 4; in Cæsar's day, 6; Cæsar's conquest of, 6–8; latinization of, 8–10; introduction of Christianity in, 11; bishops in, 11, 12; invaded by barbarians, 13; languages of, 17; extent of, 33; is a primary need of America, 393–396  
 France, Anatole, on Racine, 205, 206; on Abbé Prévost, 243; as novelist, 383; on Paris, 394  
 Franche-Comté, 128, 132  
*Francique*, 17  
 François I, quatrain of, 116; character, 135, 136; his quarrel with Charles V, 135, 142, 143; Renaissance under, 136–141, 143–151; in Italy (Marignano), 141; and the Reformation, 144, 149, 150; tomb of, 151  
 François II, 157, 158  
 François II, Duke of Brittany, 129  
 Franco-Prussian War, 346–348, 377  
 Frankfort, Treaty of, 348, 349  
 Franks, their settlement in France, 6, 13, 14; adopt orthodoxy, 12, 15; Merovingian dynasty, 14–17; Carolingians, 16–31; name for Europeans, 64  
 Frederick Barbarossa, 56  
 Frederick the Great, 235, 245, 246, 252  
 Frémiet, Emmanuel, sculptor, 375  
 French language, first record of, 28; international, 64; purification of, 183, 184; dictionary of, 184  
 French nation, formation of, 6, 8, 18  
 Friedland, battle of, 315  
 Froissart, Jean, quoted on Queen Philippa, 78; as a lad, 82; quoted on battle of Poitiers, 82–84; his account of *jacqueries*, 88; quotations from, 91  
 Froment, Nicolas, painter, 131, 139  
 Fronde, the, 187–190, 196  
 Fructidor, the 18th, *coup d'état* of, 310  
 Futurists, 373  
 GABRIEL, JACQUES ANGE, architect, 260  
 Gaetani, Benedetto, *see* Boniface VIII  
 Gaillon, Château, 134, 135  
*Gallia cisalpina*, 7  
 Gallicanism, 69, 209, 247, 248  
 Gallieni, Gen. Joseph S., 364

- Galliffet, Gen., in Dreyfus *affaire*, 357  
 Gambetta, Léon, 334, 347, 353  
 Garnier, Charles, architect, 377  
 Garonne, the, 3  
 Gascons, speech of, 183  
 Gascony, 43, 44  
 Gauguin, Paul, painter, 370  
 Gaul, *see* France  
 Gauls, *see* Celts  
 Gautier, Théophile, 328, 384, 385  
 Geoffrin, Madame, 242  
 Geoffroi Plantagenet, 37  
 Gérard, François Pascal, painter, 324  
 Géricault, Jean Louis André Théodore, painter, 325  
 German Empire, proclaimed, 347, 348  
 German language, first record of, 28  
 Germany, Romans in, 9; dismemberment of, 180; at Algéciras conference, 359; at Agadir, 360. *See also* Great War  
 Gibbon, Edward, 267  
 Gibraltar, captured by English, 226  
 Giocondo, Fra, architect, 135  
 Giotto, his portrait of Saint Louis, 58  
 Girardon, François, sculptor, 216, 218  
 Giraut de Borneil, troubadour, 55  
 Girondins, 292, 294, 298, 301, 302  
 Giusti, Giovanni, sculptor, 135  
 Gnostics, 11  
 Goethe, Johann Wolfgang von, 326; on Claude Lorraine, 220, 271  
 Goncourt, Edmond de, novelist, 381  
 Goncourt, Jules de, novelist, 381  
 Gothic architecture, 47, 48; revolution from Romanesque architecture to, 49, 50  
 Goujon, Jean, sculptor, 151, 152, 168  
 Gounod, Charles François, operas by, 342  
 Gourmont, Remy de, 386, 387  
 Gouthière, worker in bronze, 260  
 Goya, Francisco, painter, 318  
 Grandson, battle of, 127  
 Grasse, Admiral de, 269  
 Gravelotte, battle of, 347  
 Great War, 361-366, 390-393  
 Greek Church, 19  
 Greeks, in France, 5  
 Gregory of Tours, books of, 17  
 Gregory VII, Pope, *see* Hildebrand  
 Greuze, Jean Baptiste, painter, 261  
 Grévy, Pres. Jules, 352-354  
 Grignan, Madame de, daughter of Madame de Sévigné, 201  
 Gros, Antoine Jean, Baron, painter, 324  
 Grottoes, 4  
 Guérin, Pierre Narcisse, painter, 324  
*Gueux, Les*, 121  
 Guillaume IX, Duke of Aquitaine, troubadour, 51  
 Guillaume Bras-de-Fer, 35  
 Guillaume d'Aquitaine, 40  
 Guillaume Longue-Épée, 34  
 Guillotin, Dr. Joseph Ignace, 278  
 Guiscard, Robert, 35  
 Guise family, 156-159, 163-169, 175  
 Guitry, Sacha, dramatist, 389  
 Guizot, François Pierre Guillaume, 320, 327  
 Guyenne, 43, 44, 76  
 Guyon, Madame, 210  
 HADRIAN, Emperor, his wall, 9  
 Halévy, Ludovic, dramatist, 342  
 Hapsburg, House of, 130, 172, 173, 178, 180, 182  
 Harcourt, Count of, execution of, 81  
 Hardouin-Mansart, Jules, architect, 214, 215, 218, 219  
 Harold, Earl of Wessex, 35  
 Harpignies, Henri, painter, 367  
 Hastings, battle of, 35  
 Haussmann, Georges Eugène, Baron, 342  
 Hébert, Jacques René, 304, 305  
 Helvetii, 8  
 Helvetius, Claude Adrien, philosopher, 250  
 Henri I, 33  
 Henri II, 139, 150-154  
 Henri III (Henri d'Anjou), 163-166  
 Henri IV, 166-173. *See also* Navarre, Henri de  
 Henri VI, so-called, 105, 106, 111  
 Henri, comte de Champagne, 42, 51  
 Henry, Col., in Dreyfus *affaire*, 357

- Henry I of England, 37  
 Henry II of England, 37, 38, 42, 43, 46, 51  
 Henry III of England, 63  
 Henry IV (Henry Bolingbroke) of England, 95, 100  
 Henry V of England, 100, 103-105  
 Henry VII of England, 130  
 Henry VIII of England, 142, 143, 149  
 Henry, son of Henry II of England, 46  
 Heredia, José Maria de, 384  
 Héroard, Jean, royal physician, quoted, 177  
 Hervieu, Paul Ernest, dramatist, 389  
 Hildebrand (Gregory VII), 41, 70  
 Hofer, Andreas, 315  
 Hohenlinden, battle of, 312  
 Holbach, Paul H. T., baron d', philosopher, 251  
 Holstein, *see* Schleswig-Holstein  
 Holy Alliance, 318  
 Holy Roman Empire, beginning of, 24, 33; end of, 314  
 Hôpital, Michel l', 158  
 Houdon, Jean Antoine, sculptor, 94, 252, 260  
 Hudson, Sir Henry, 317  
 Hugo, Victor, 137, 327, 328  
 Huguenots, and Catholics, 154-168; and Richelieu, 178, 179; under Louis XIV, 209  
 Hundred Days, 316  
 Hundred Years' War, 74; causes of, 69, 75, 76; the course of, 76-120  
 Huns, defeated near Châlons, 13  
 Huysmans, Joris Karl, novelist, 388
- IBERIAN, the term, 4  
 Iberians, the people, 4, 5  
 Île-de-France, 43, 50, 56; life in, under François I, 140  
 Île de Ré, 38, 179  
 India, English and French in, 236; transferred to England, 245, 246  
 Indre, the, 3, 125; valley of, 37  
 Ingres, Jean Auguste Dominique, painter, 326  
 Inkermann, battle of, 330  
 Institut, 308
- Isabelle, daughter of Philippe le Bel, 69, 74  
 Issoire, 40  
 Italian Independence, War of, 330, 331  
 Italy, Renaissance in, 131  
 Ivry, battle of, 166
- JACOBIN Club, 289, 301, 303, 306  
 Jacobins, 291-298, 306  
 Jacquerie, the, 87-89  
 James I of Scotland, 103  
 James V of Scotland, 156  
 Jansenism, 197, 198, 209, 227, 246-248, 337  
 Jansenius, Cornelius, 197  
 Jaurès, Jean, socialist, 355, 357  
 Jean de Chelles, architect, 58, 59  
 Jean de Conflans, 87  
 Jean de Meung, *Roman de la Rose*, 65, 122, 123  
 Jean le Bel of Liège, 82  
 Jean le Bon, 79-91  
 Jean sans Peur, son of Philippe le Hardi, Duke of Burgundy, 98-100, 103, 104, 114  
 Jeanne d'Arc, 107-113, 137  
 Jeanne de Bourbon, queen of Charles V, 94  
 Jemmapes, battle of, 298  
 Jena, battle of, 315  
 Jervis, John, Earl of St. Vincent, 311  
 Jesuits, 198, 199, 247, 248, 353  
 Joan, daughter of Louis X, 74  
 Jodelle, Étienne, Sieur de Lymodin, poet, 152  
 Joffre, Joseph, Marshal, 364, 366  
 John (King John), son of Henry II of England, 46, 47  
 Joinville, Jean, Sire de, his chronicle, 64, 65  
 Josephine, Empress, 309, 314, 315  
 Jourdan, Jean Baptiste, Marshal, 314  
 Jouvenet, Jean, painter, 222  
 Jumièges, Abbey of, 36, 117
- KIRKMICHAEL, JOHN, 105  
 Kluck, Gen. A. von, 364  
 Knights Hospitalers, 73



- Knights Templars, suppression of, 69,  
72-74
- Königgrätz, battle of, 344
- LABICHE, ÉDOUARD, dramatist, 342
- Labor organizations, 360
- La Bourdonnais, Bertrand François  
Mahé, naval officer, 236
- La Bruyère, Jean de, *Les Caractères*,  
211
- La Chaise, Père, 226
- La Champmeslé, actress, 203-205
- Lackland, John, 38
- La Fayette, Gilbert de, 105
- La Fayette, marquis de, in American  
Revolution, 268, 269; in French  
Revolution, 274, 277, 279, 281, 282,  
285-290, 295; in 1815, 317; under  
Louis XVIII, 318-320
- Laffitte, Jacques, banker and politi-  
cian, 320
- La Fontaine, Jean de, 200, 202-204
- Lamartine, Alphonse-Marie Louis de,  
320, 321, 328
- Lamballe, princesse de, 266, 270, 271,  
297
- Lamotte, Madame de, and the Queen's  
necklace, 271, 272
- Lancaster, Duke of ("Old John of  
Gaunt"), 81
- Langret, Nicolas, painter, 239, 244
- Langeais, Château, 130
- Langue d'oc*, 43, 45
- Languedoc, 44
- Languedocien, Provençal dialect, 45
- Langue d'oïl*, 43
- Lannes, Jean, Marshal, 311, 314
- Laon, Notre-Dame de, 49
- La Poplinière, Alexandre Jean Joseph  
de, 244
- Largillière, Nicolas, portrait painter,  
221, 222
- La Rochefoucauld, François VI de, 189,  
196
- La Rochejaquelein, Henri de, 299
- La Rochelle, 178, 179
- La Tour, Quentin, his pastels, 236,  
237, 240
- La Trémouille, Louis de, 107
- Launay, marquis de, governor of  
Bastille, 281, 282
- Laurana, Francesco, medalist and  
sculptor, 135
- La Vallière, Mlle de, 215, 227
- La Vendée, 38
- Law, John, 232, 233
- League of Nations, 173, 175, 393
- Le Brun, Charles, painter, 200, 215,  
216, 217, 221-223
- Lecocq, Alexandre Charles, musician,  
342
- Leconte de Lisle, Charles Marie, poet,  
341
- Leczynska, Marie, married to Louis  
XV, 233
- Lefebvre, François Joseph, Marshal,  
311
- Legion of Honor, 312, 314
- Legouvé, Ernest Wilfried, *Adrienne  
Lecouvreur*, 236
- Leipzig, battle of, 316
- Lemaître, Jules, 384
- Lemercier, Jacques, architect, 187
- Le Nain, Antoine, painter, 186
- Le Nain, Louis, painter, 186
- Le Nain, Mathieu, painter, 186
- Lenclos, Ninon de, 195, 204
- Le Nôtre, André, architect and garden  
designer, 211, 215, 216
- Leo XIII, Pope, 355
- Leopold of Austria, Emperor, 225
- Le Sage, Alain René, *Gil Blas*, 243
- Lescot, Pierre, architect, 151, 152, 168
- Lepinasse, Mlle de, 250, 262
- Lesseps, Ferdinand Marie, viscount  
de, 355
- Le Sueur, Eustache, 186, 221
- Le Tellier, Michel, secretary of state  
for war, 192, 193, 218
- Le Tellier, Père, 226
- Leuthen, battle of, 246
- Le Vau, Louis, architect, 214, 215, 218,  
219
- Liège, revolt of, 127; attacked by  
Germans, 363
- Ligny, battle of, 317
- Ligurian, the term, 3
- Ligurians, the people, 5

- Limbourg, Pol de, miniature painter, 96  
 Limousin, Provençal dialect, 45  
 Limousin, province, 38  
 Limousin, Léonard, worker in enamel, 140, 168  
 Lionne, Hugues de, 192-194  
 Literature, *Chanson de Roland*, 20-22; Ronsard, 37; Provençal, 44, 45; troubadours, 51-56; thirteenth century, 63-67; under Charles VII and Louis XI, 115-118, 121-124; under François I, 145-148, 151-153; sixteenth century, 168-170; under Richelieu, 182-186; under Louis XIV, 194-213; under Louis XV, 242, 243, 248-255; romantic movement in, 255, 326, 327; in period before Revolution, 261-263; in early nineteenth century, 326-329; "naturalism" in, 336; in Second Empire, 336-343; in last fifty years, 379-389; *symbolistes*, 385-388  
 Lloyd George, David, 391, 392  
 Loches, 117, 125, 137  
 Loir, the, 3, 125  
 Loire, the, 3, 124; valley of, 136, 137, 140  
 Lombards, and Pépin le Bref, 19; and Charlemagne, 23  
 Lombardy, 331  
 Longshanks, Edward, 68  
 Longueville, Madame de, 188  
 Lorraine, the name, 28; becomes French province, 234, 235, 257; ceded to Germany, 348, 361; returned to France, 392  
 Lorraine, Claude, painter, 219, 220  
 Lorraine, House of, 156  
 Lorris, Guillaume de, *Roman de la Rose*, 65  
 Lothaire, 28  
 Loti, Pierre, 382  
 Loubet, Pres. Émile, 358  
 Louis I, le Débonnaire, 27, 28  
 Louis II, the Stammerer, 28  
 Louis VI, *le Gros*, 33, 43, 46, 49  
 Louis VII, 37, 38, 42, 43, 46, 49, 51  
 Louis VIII, 57, 58  
 Louis IX, Saint Louis, education, 58-61; goes on Crusade, 61, 62; his reign, 62, 63  
 Louis X, *le Hutin* (the Scuffler), 74  
 Louis XI, policy of, 115, 126; his court painter, 118; coronation, 123, 124; his reign, 124-128; and Plessis-lès-Tours, 125, 137  
 Louis XII, campaigns in Italy, 133; and Blois, 134, 135, 137; death, 135; death mask, 139  
 Louis XIII, 174-187, 214  
 Louis XIV, marriage, 190; *L'État, c'est moi*, 190; character of, 191; boundaries for which he aimed, 192, 193, 224; his advisers, 192, 193; his wars, 193, 224-226; literature under, 194-213; architecture and painting under, 214-223; his marital affairs, 226-228; his worry for his soul, 228; his last years, 229; death, 230; the harvest of his reign, 230  
 Louis XV, *le Bien-aimé*, 230-264; betrothal, 231; marriage, 233; statue with inscription, 238; artists of his reign, 238-240; the "style" of, 240, 259, 260; room decorations and furniture, 240-242; salons, 242; literature, 242, 243, 248-255; vices of the Court under, 244, 245; loss of colonial empire in Canada and India, 245, 246; state of religion under, 246-248; on the royal authority, 258; death, 264  
 Louis XVI, as Dauphin, 257; the "style" of, 259, 260; appearance, 264; character, 264, 270, 277; in the Revolution, 280-296; execution of, 299  
 Louis XVIII, 316, 318  
 Louis, Duke of Orléans, brother of Charles VI, 94, 96; character, 97, 98; his quarrel with Duke of Burgundy, 98, 99  
 Louis the German, 28  
 Louis-Philippe, 320, 329  
 Louisburg, capture of, 246

- Louisiana, 232, 246  
 Louveciennes, pavilion at, 260  
 Louvois, François Michel Le Tellier, marquis de, 193, 194, 223; death, 226  
 Loyola, Ignatius, 154  
 Lunéville, Treaty of, 312  
 Luther, Martin, 143, 144  
 Luynes, Albert, duc de, 176, 177
- MACAULAY, THOMAS B., *Battle of Ivry*, 166; on Louis XIV, 191  
 Machault, Jean Baptiste, minister, 245  
 MacMahon, Marie Edme Patrice Maurice, Marshal, 330, 347, 352  
 Magenta, battle of, 331  
 Maintenon, Madame de, 195, 206, 210, 226-229  
 Malebranche, Père Nicolas, philosopher, 228  
 Malherbe, François de, poet, 183, 184  
 Mallarmé, Stéphane, poet, 385, 386, 387  
 Malplaquet, battle of, 226  
 Manet, Édouard, painter, 367, 379  
 Manny, Sir Walter, 78  
 Mansart, François, architect, 187, 211  
 Marat, Jean Paul, revolutionist, 284, 291, 296, 297, 301, 302, 307  
 Marcabrun, troubadour, 54  
 Marcel, Étienne, 79, 80, 85-91  
 Marchand, Gen. Jean Baptiste, 316, 358, 359  
 Marengo, battle of, 312  
 Marguerite de Navarre, sister of François I, 136, 140, 148  
 Marguerite de Provence, 58  
 Marguerite de Valois, quoted on massacre of St. Bartholomew, 160-163; divorced, 172  
 Maria Theresa, 190, 234, 235, 257  
 Marie, Princess, daughter of Eleanor of Aquitaine, 42, 43, 51  
 Marie Antoinette, marriage, 257; character and appearance, 264; title *l'Autrichienne*, 270; and the Queen's necklace, 271, 272; in the Revolution, 284, 285, 286, 294; death, 302, 303
- Marie Louise, wife of Napoléon, 315  
 Marie Stuart, wife of François II, 157  
 Marignano, battle of, 141  
 Marivaux, Pierre Carlet de Chamblain de, 242  
 Marmont, August Frédéric Louis Viesse, Marshal, 311  
 Marne, the, 3; battle of, 364  
 Marot, Clément, poet, 138, 139, 148, 149, 156  
 Marseilles, founded by Greeks, 5; sacked by the Saracens, 29  
 Martin, Henri, painter, 374  
 Masséna, André, Marshal, 309, 314  
 Mathieu, Provençal poet, 45  
 Matilda, daughter of Henry I of England, 37  
 Matilda, Queen, 35  
 Matisse, Henri, painter, 372  
 Maunoury, Gen., 364  
 Maupassant, Guy de, 381, 382  
 Maupeou, Chancellor, 257-259, 265  
 Maurepas, Jean Frédéric Phélippeaux, comte de, 264  
 Maximilian, Archduke, in Mexico, 332, 333  
 Maximilian, Emperor, 130  
 Mayor of the palace, 16  
 Mazarin, Cardinal, 188-191, 195; tomb, 218  
 Meaux, cathedral of, 50  
 Médicis, Catherine de, 150, 151, 157-160, 166  
 Médicis, Marie de, wife of Henri IV, 172-177, 180  
 Meilhac, Henri, dramatist, 342  
 Meissonier, Jean Louis Ernest, painter, 374  
 Melchior de Vogüé, 346  
 Mercie, Jean Marius Antonin, sculptor, 375  
 Mercier, minister of war, in Dreyfus *affaire*, 356  
 Mérimée, Prosper, 327  
 Mérovée, chief of the Franks, 14  
 Merovingian dynasty, 14-17  
 Metz, 13, 16, 153, 347  
 Mexico, and Napoleon III, 332, 333  
 Michelet, Jules, historian, 327

- Mignard, Pierre, 195, 199, 201, 221-223  
 Milan, 141, 142  
 Millerand, Alexandre, premier, 357, 358, 361  
 Millet, Jean François, painter, 336  
 Mirabeau, Honoré Gabriel Victor Riquetti, comte de, 278, 280, 284, 288, 289, 307  
 Mistral, Frédéric, 44  
 Mistral, the, 44  
 Molai, Jacques, de, burning of, 73  
 Molière, Jean Baptiste, 199-201, 203-205  
 Molinos, Miguel, Spanish priest, 209, 210  
 Monet, Claude, painter, 367, 368  
 Montagne, the party of, 292, 301, 302  
 Montaigne, Michel E. de, 155, 164, 169, 170  
 Montcorbier, François de, *see* Villon, François  
 Montereau, Pierre de, architect, 61  
 Montespan, Madame de, 215, 227, 231  
 Montesquieu, baron de, 249  
 Montfort, Amaury de, 57  
 Montfort, Simon de, 56, 57  
 Montigny, Regnier de, 121  
 Montijo, Eugène de, Empress, 323, 342, 346, 347  
 Montmorency, Anne de, Constable of France, 150, 151, 155, 158, 159, 211  
 Montreal, capture of, 246  
 Morat, battle of, 127  
 Moreau, Gen. Jean Victor, 312, 313  
 Morny, duc de, 342, 343  
 Morocco, claims to, 359, 360; taken by France, 362  
 Moscow, entered by French, 315  
 Mother Goose stories, writer of, 219  
 Murat, Joachim, Marshal, 308, 311, 314, 315  
 Musciatto, conspirator, 71  
 Musset, Alfred de, 328  
 NANCY, battle of, 127  
 Nantes, cathedral of, 129; Edict, 168, 178; revocation of Edict of, 209, 225, 230, 244  
 Naples, 131-133  
 Napoléon I, birth, 257; under Barras, 308, 309, under the Directory, 309-312; goes to Egypt, 310; First Consul, 312; accomplishments, 312, 313; Consul for life, 312; Emperor, 314; his wars, 314, 315; invades Russia, 315, 316; abdication, 316; banished to Elba, 316; returns from Elba, 316; at Waterloo, 317; banished to St. Helena, 317  
 Napoleon II, *see* *Aiglon*  
 Napoleon III, Louis Napoleon, his early life, 322; becomes Emperor, 323; in Crimean War and War of Italian Independence, 330, 331; attempt on his life, 331; his foreign policy, 332, 333; literature and art under, 334-343; his character, 342; his diplomacy, 344; surrender of, 347  
 National Assembly, *see* *Assemblée Nationale*  
 National Convention, 296-309  
*Nationaux, Les*, 275  
 Nattier, Jean Marc, portrait painter, 239, 240  
 "Naturalism," in the arts and literature, 336, 340  
 Navarre, Henri de, 159, 160, 162, 163, 170; becomes King of France, 166. *See also* Henri IV  
 Necker, Jacques, his reforms, 267, 268, 275, 280, 281  
 Necker, Madame, 267  
 Neerwinden, battle of, 299  
 Nelson, Horatio, Viscount, 310  
 Nemours, duc de, 127  
 Nerval, Gérard de, 385  
 Neustria, 16  
 Ney, Michel, Marshal, 314, 316  
 Nice, ceded to France, 331  
 Nîmes, 45  
 Nimwegen, Peace of, 194  
 Nivelle, Gen. Robert Georges, 365, 390  
 Noailles, comtesse Mathieu de, 388  
 Nogaret, Guillaume de, his hatred of the Papacy, 70-72; his opposition to Knights Templars, 72-74

- Normandy, founding of duchy of, 30; description of, 34-36
- Normans, in Normandy, 30, 34, 35; in southern Italy and Sicily, 35.  
*See also* Norsemen
- Norsemen (Normans), raid France, 29; found duchy of Normandy, 30
- Notables, assembly of, 273
- Noyon, Notre-Dame de, 49
- Octroi*, 266
- Offenbach, Jacques, 342
- Ohnet, Georges, 380
- Oliver and Roland, 20, 21, 36
- Oliver le Daim, 126
- Ollivier, Émile, 345
- Orange, triumphal arch at, 45
- Orléans, sacked by Norsemen (Normans), 29; siege of, 107-110; capture of, 347
- Orléans, duc d', nephew of Louis XV, regent, 230, 231, 233
- Orléans, Gaston d', brother of Louis XIII, 180
- Orsini, his attempt to kill Napoleon, 331
- Ostrogoths, 14
- Oudenarde, battle of, 226
- PAINTING, under Richelieu, 186; in time of Louis XIV, 219-223; in time of Louis XV, 238-240; of style *Louis XVI*, 260, 261; in eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, 323-326; romantic school, 325; in Second Empire, 334-336; "naturalism" in, 336; during last fifty years, 367-374; impressionists, 367-372; neo-impressionists, 372, 373; post-impressionists, 373; cubists, 373; futurists, neo-classicists, *surréalistes*, 373
- Pajou, Augustin, sculptor, 256, 260
- Palermo, Capella Palatina at, 35
- Palissy, Bernard, potter, 168
- Panama Canal, 355
- Papacy, comes to understanding with Pépin le Bref, 19; and Charlemagne, 23; Philippe le Bel's quarrel with, 69-72; transference of seat of, to Avignon, 72, 92
- Paris, captured by Norsemen (Normans), 29; Notre-Dame de, 49, 58, 59; Sainte-Chapelle, 62; church of Saint-Merri, 86; church of the Célestins, 94; Hôtel de Cluny, 134; Fountain of the Innocents, 151; churches of Richelieu's time, 187; Saint-Jean-de-Luz, 190; architecture of Louis XIV's time, 218, 219; Church of Saint-Sulpice, 229; Hôtel Subise (Palais des Archives Nationales), 241; architecture of Louis XVI style, 260; siege of, 347, 348; various sculptural and architectural monuments in, 375, 377; Musée Rodin, 376; the beauty of, 393, 394
- Paris, Treaty of (1763), 246; Treaty of (1783), 269
- Parlement de Paris, 189, 190, 194, 246-248, 254, 257, 258, 264, 265, 272-275
- Parlements*, 257, 274
- Parnassiens*, 341, 384, 387
- Pascal, Blaise, 197-199
- Pasteur, Louis, 337
- Pater, Jean Baptiste Joseph, painter, 239, 244
- Paul the Deacon, 27
- Paul the Grammarian, 27
- Paulette, La*, 175
- Pavia, battle of, 142
- Peace Conference (Paris, 1919), 392
- Pedro of Aragon, King, 57
- Pénicaud family (Leonard Nardon, Jean I, Jean II, Jean III, Pierre), workers in enamel, 140
- Pépin d'Héristal, founder of Carolingian family, 15, 16
- Pépin de Landen, mayor of the palace, 16
- Pépin le Bref, 18, 19
- Périgueux, cathedral of Saint-Front, 38, 39
- Perrault, Charles, writer of *Mother Goose* stories, 219
- Perrault, Claude, architect, 219
- Perret, A. and G., 378



- Perronneau, portrait painter, 240  
 Pétain, Gen. Henri P., 365, 390  
 Peter of Beaujeu, husband of Anne de Beaujeu, 128, 129  
 Pétiou de Villeneuve, Jérôme, 278  
 Petrarch, Francesco, on Arnaut Daniel, 55  
 Philip II of Spain, 153, 154, 158, 163  
 Philip IV of Spain, 175  
 Philip V of Spain, 226, 229, 231, 233  
 Philippa of Hainault, Queen, pleads for French prisoners, 78  
 Philippe I, 33, 46  
 Philippe II (Philippe Auguste), 43, 47, 51, 56-58  
 Philippe III, le Hardi, 68  
 Philippe IV, le Bel, his character, 68; his policy, 69; his quarrel with the Papacy, 69-72; his war on Knights Templars, 72-74; other events of his reign, 74, 75  
 Philippe V, 74  
 Philippe VI, 74; in Hundred Years' War, 76-79  
 Philippe-Égalité, 280, 303  
 Philippe le Bon, 104  
 Philippe le Hardi, Duke of Burgundy, 94, 96; his patronage of art, 97; his quarrel with Louis, the king's brother, 98  
 Philippe of Valois, 78  
*Philosophes*, the, 248-255  
 Picardie, 33, 34; seized by Louis XI, 128  
 Picasso, painter, 373  
 Pichegru, Gen. Charles, 303, 313  
 Picquart, Col. Marie Georges, in Dreyfus *affaire*, 356, 357  
 Pierrefonds, castle of, 98  
 Pigalle, Jean Baptiste, sculptor, 240, 260  
 Pilon, Germain, sculptor, 94, 151, 152, 168  
 Pissarro, Camille, painter, 367  
*Pléiade*, the, 152  
 Plessis-lès-Tours, 125, 137, 139  
 Plutarch, *Lives*, 168  
 Poe, Edgar Allan, 341  
 Poincaré, Pres. Raymond, 358, 361  
 Poitiers, battle of (732), 18; raided by Norsemen (Normans), 29; Notre-Dame-la-Grande, 39; battle of, (1365), 81-84; ducal palace at, 96  
 Poitou, 39  
 Poland, 332  
 Polignac, comtesse de, 270  
 Polish Succession, War of, 234  
 Pompadour, Madame de, 230, 237, 238, 245-247, 250, 256, 259, 260  
 Pondichéry, 236  
 Pont du Gard, 45  
 Poquelin, Jean, father of Molière, 199  
 Port-Royal, 198  
 Pot, Philippe, tomb of, 130  
 Poussin, Nicolas, 186, 196  
 Prévost, Abbé, 242, 243  
 Prévost, Marcel, novelist, 388  
*Prévôt de marchands*, 80  
 Primaticcio, Francesco, painter, 138, 145  
 Printemps, Yvonne, 389  
 Protestant Reformation, 72  
 Protestants, granted liberty of conscience by Edict of Nantes, 168; under Richelieu, 182; under Louis XV, 247, 248. *See also* Huguenots  
 Proudhon, Pierre Joseph, 321  
 Proust, Marcel, novelist and dramatist, 388, 389  
 Provençal language, 43, 45  
 Provençal literature, 44, 45, 51-56  
 Provence (*provincia nostra*), 7, 44, 45; annexed to France, 128  
 Prudhomme, Sully, 341  
 Prud'hon, Pierre Paul, painter, 324, 325  
 Prussian Federation, 344  
 Puget, Pierre, sculptor, 216, 217  
 Puvis de Chavannes, Pierre Cécile, 13, 374  
 Pyramids, battle of, 310  
 Pyrenees, Peace of the, 190, 207, 217  
 QUATRE-BRAS, 317  
 Quebec, founded, 179; capture of, 246  
 Queen's necklace, 271, 272  
 Quietism, 210

- RABELAIS, FRANÇOIS, 145-148, 155  
 Racine, Jean Baptiste, 203-207  
 Raffaëlli, Jean François, painter, 374  
 Ramillies, battle of, 226  
 Ravillac, François, assassin of Henri IV, 173  
 Ravenna, battle of, 133  
 Raymond V of Toulouse, Count, 53  
 Raymond VI of Toulouse, Count, 56  
 Reformation, French, 143, 144, 149, 150, 154  
 Regnault, Henri, painter, 374  
 Reign of Terror, 303  
 Reims, cathedral of, 14  
 Renaissance, the, in Italy, 131; in France, 133-141, 143-151  
 Renan, Ernest, 337-339  
 Renard, Jules, novelist, 388  
 René, King, of Provence, 130  
 Renoir, Pierre Auguste, painter, 368, 369  
 Republic, of 1848, 320; Third, 347-396  
 Retz, Cardinal de, 188, 195, 198; *Mémoires*, 196  
 Revolution, French, causes of, 254-257, 271; course of, 278-307  
 Revolutionary Committee, 301  
*Revue des Deux Mondes*, founded, 337  
 Reynolds, Sir Joshua, 323  
 Rhone, the, 3  
 Ribot, Alexandre Félix Joseph, prime minister, 361  
 Richard, son of Henry II of England, 46, 47  
 Richard Cœur de Lion, 37, 47, 52, 53, 56  
 Richard II of England, 95  
 Richelieu, Armand du Plessis, duc de, Cardinal, 176-187, 245; tomb, 218  
 Richemont, Connétable, 107  
 Richepin, Jean, 206  
 Rigaud, Hyacinthe, portrait painter, 222  
 Robert, Hubert, painter, 261  
 Robert de Clermont, 86, 87  
 Robert le Diable, 34  
 Robert le Fort, comte de Tours, 30  
 Robert II, King of France, 32  
 Robertet, Florimond, minister of finance, 135  
 Robespierre, Maximilien Marie Isidore, 278, 289, 294-307  
 Rochambeau, Jean Baptiste, comte de, 269  
 Rocroi, battle of, 180  
 Rodin, Auguste, sculptor, 78, 376, 377  
 Roger the Great, Count, 35  
 Rohan, Cardinal, and the Queen's necklace, 271, 272  
*Rois fainéants*, 17  
 Roland, Count of the Breton Mark, 20-22, 36  
 Roland, Jean Marie, Girondist minister of state, 293, 294  
 Roland, Madame, 293, 303  
 Rollo, Duke, 30  
*Roman*, 17  
 Roman Church, 15, 18  
*Roman de la Rose*, 65  
 Roman Empire, decline of, 10; Christianity in, 10-13  
 Romanesque architecture, 38, 39, 46; revolution to Gothic effected, 49, 50  
 Romanesque sculpture, three schools of, 39, 41  
 Romans, their part in formation of French nation, 6; their conquest and organization of Gaul, 6-10  
 Romantic movement, in painting, 325; in literature, 326, 327, 340  
 Roncevaux, pass of, 19, 20, 36  
 Ronsard, Pierre de, 37, 139, 151-153, 155, 183  
 Rosny, Frères, novelists, 388  
 Rossbach, battle of, 245, 246  
 Rosso, Rosso del, painter, 138, 145  
 Rostand, Edmond, *La Princesse Loiraine*, 53; *Cyrano de Bergerac*, 195, 389  
 Rouen, 96; Palais de Justice, 134; siege of, 159  
 Rouget de Lisle, Claude Joseph, battle hymn of, 293  
 Roumanille, Joseph, Provençal poet, 45  
 Rousseau, H., painter, 373

- Rousseau, Jean Jacques, 248, 253-255, 326  
 Rousseau, Théodore, painter, 334  
 Roussillon, province, 128, 130, 132  
 Rubens, Peter Paul, his pictures of  
   Marie de Médicis, 172, 174, 176, 177  
 Rude, François, sculptor, 335, 375  
 Rudel, Jaufre, troubadour, 53, 54  
 Rupi, Jean de, sculptor, 96  
 Russia, invaded by Napoleon, 315.  
   *See also* Great War  
 Russo-Japanese War, 359  
 Rutebeuf, trouvère, 66  
 Ryswick, Treaty of, 224
- SABLÉ, MADAME DE, 196, 198  
 Saint-André, Maréchal de, 158  
 Saint Bartholomew, massacre of, 159-163  
 Saint Bernard, 41, 47, 48  
 Saint-Denis, abbey of, 49, 60, 92, 96, 135, 151  
 Saint Denis, bishop of Paris, 12  
 Saint Éloi, bishop of Noyon, 16  
 Saint François de Paule, 128  
 Saint François de Sales, 197  
 Saint-Germain-en-Laye, Château de, 138  
 Saint Helena, 317  
 Saint Hilaire, bishop of Poitiers, 12, 14  
 Saint Irénée, bishop of Lyons, 11  
 Saint-Just, Louis Antoine Léon de, 302, 306  
 Saint Martin of Tours, 12  
 Saint-Michel de la Mer del Peril, Abbey of, 36  
 Saint-Ouen, church of, 96  
 Saint-Pierre, Bernardin de, 261, 262  
 Saint-Pol, comte de, 127  
 Saint-Quentin, battle of, 155  
 Saint Remi, bishop of Reims, 14  
 Saint Saturnin, bishop of Toulouse, 12  
 Saint-Simon, Claude Henri, comte de, socialist, 321  
 Saint-Simon, Louis de Rouvroy, duc de, 230, 243  
 Saint Vincent de Paul, 197
- Sainte-Beuve, Charles A., 336, 337; on Joinville's chronicle, 65; on Louis XIV, 191  
 Sainte Blandine, 11  
 Sainte Geneviève, 13, 14  
 Salic law, 75  
 Sand, George, 327  
 Saracens, defeated at Poitiers, 18; at Roncevaux, 20, 21; raid the south of France, 29  
 Saratoga, surrender of Burgoyne at, 268, 269  
 Sarcey, Francisque, 384  
 Sardou, Victorien, 384  
 Sarrasin, Jacques, sculptor, 187  
 Sarrebrück, battle of, 346  
 Sarto, Andrea del, in France, 144  
 Saumur, sacked by Norsemen (Normans), 29  
 Sauves, Madame de, 165  
 Savoy, ceded to France, 331  
 Saxe, Hermann Maurice, comte de, Marshal, 235, 236  
 Scarron, Paul, 187, 194, 195  
 Scarron, Madame, *see* Maintenon, Madame de  
 Schiller, Johann C. F. von, 326  
 Schleswig-Holstein, 333, 344  
 Science, in literature, 379  
 Scott, Sir Walter, 38, 72, 326; *Quentin Durward*, 125, 127; *Anne of Geierstein*, 127  
 Scribe, Augustin Eugène, 384  
 Sculpture, Romanesque, 39, 41, 46; school of, at Dijon, 97; under Richelieu, 187; under Louis XIV, 216; under Louis XV, 240; of style Louis XVI, 260; in Second Empire, 335; in last fifty years, 374-377  
 Sebastopol, siege of, 330  
 Sedan, battle of, 347  
 Seine, the, 3, 394  
 Senegal, 269  
 Senlis, Notre-Dame de, 49  
 Sens, Council of, 49; Notre-Dame de, 49  
 Serajevo, crime of, 362  
 Servetus, Michael, 155  
 Seurat, painter, 373

- Seven Years' War, 245, 246, 253, 256, 268
- Sévigné, Madame de, 193, 195, 201, 206, 212, 213
- Shakespeare, William, 206; *King John*, 58; *Henry V*, quoted, 100, 101
- Sidonius Apollinarius, quoted, 39
- Sieyès, Abbé, 275, 278, 280, 311, 312
- Sluter, Claus, sculptor, 97
- Sluys, battle of, 76
- Socialism, 321
- Soissons, cathedral of, 50
- Solano, Andrea, sculptor, 135
- Solferino, battle of, 331
- Somme, battle of, 390
- Sorel, Agnes, 117, 120, 124, 125, 137
- Soufflot, Jacques Germain, architect, 260
- Soult, Nicolas Jean de Dieu, Marshal, 314, 320
- Spanish Mark, 22
- Spanish Succession, War of, 224-226
- Staël, Madame de, 267
- Stanislas Leczinski, king of Poland, 233, 234, 257
- States-General, beginning of, 71; under Jean le Bon, 79, 80, 85, 87; of Oct. 1588, 164; of 1614-1615, 175; convocation of (1788), 275; elections to, 275-277; reforms advocated by, 277
- Stendhal, *see* Beyle
- Strasbourg, secured by France, 224
- Strasbourg oaths, 28
- Strike, of railroad employees, 360
- Suger, Abbé, 43, 49, 60
- Sully, Maximilien de Béthune, duc de, 172, 173, 175
- Symons, Arthur, 385, 386
- Syndicalisme révolutionnaire*, 360
- Taille*, 274
- Taillebourg, battle of, 63
- Taine, Hippolyte Adolphe, 337, 338, 379
- Talleyrand, Charles Maurice de, 288, 315
- Tancrede of Hauteville, 35
- Tencin, Madame de, 237, 242, 244
- Theodosius, Emperor, 10
- Thiard, Pontus de, poet, 152
- Thibaut of Blois, 51
- Thierry, Jacques Nicolas Augustin, historian, 327
- Thiers, Adolphe, 319, 320, 327, 334, 348-352
- Thirty Years' War, 178, 190
- Tiberius, his campaign in Germany, 9
- Tilsit, Peace of, 315
- Tinayre, Marcelle, novelist, 388
- Tonkin, France takes possession of, 353
- Toul, 153
- Toulouse, city, church of Saint-Sernin, 44
- Toulouse, county, 44
- Tour de Constance, 62
- Touraine, 124, 125
- Tours, sacked by Norsemen (Normans), 29
- Trading companies, 232, 236
- Trafalgar, battle of, 314
- Trajan, Emperor, his wall, 9
- Trent, Council of, 154
- Triple Alliance, 354, 361
- Triple Entente, 359-363
- Tripoli, taken by Italy, 362
- Tristan Lermite, 126
- Troubadours, 51-56
- Trouvères*, 66
- Troyes, Treaty of, 104
- Troyon, Constant, painter, 335
- Tunis, France takes possession of, 353
- Turenne, viscount de, 189, 193, 194
- Turgot, Anne Robert Jacques, Baron d'Aulne, minister of finance, 264; his reforms, 265-267
- ULM, battle of, 314
- United States, Civil War, 332
- Unities, the, 184-186
- University of Paris, 312
- Urban II, Pope, preaches First Crusade, 40
- Utrecht, Peace of, 226
- VALMY, battle of, 298
- Vandals, 15

- Van Gogh, Vincent, painter, 335, 370, 371  
 Vanloo, Jean Baptiste, portrait painter, 237, 240  
 Varus, defeat of, 9  
 Vauban, Sebastien le Prestre, marquis de, 192  
 Vaucel, Madame de, 217  
 Vaugelas, Claude Favre, grammarian, 184  
 Vaux, Château de, 200, 214, 215  
 Vaux, marquis de, 210  
 Vaux-le-Vicomte, 218  
 Vercingetorix, Gallic chieftain, 8  
 Verdi, Guiseppe, *Rigoletto*, 137  
 Verdun, 153, 365, 366; Treaty of, 28  
 Verdun, bishop of, 127  
 Vergennes, Charles Gravier, comte de, secretary for foreign affairs, 264, 268, 269  
 Vergniaud, Pierre Victorien, 292, 303  
 Verlaine, Paul, 385, 387  
 Verneuil, marquise de, 172  
*Vers libre*, 386  
*Versillais* and *Communards*, 350  
 Versailles, Château de, 214-218; Treaty of, 392  
 Vézelay, monastery of, destroyed by Norsemen (Normans), 29; abbey of, 41; abbey church at, 50  
 Victoria, Queen, 342  
 Vidal, Peire, troubadour, 54  
 Vienne, the, 125; valley of, 37  
 Vigée-Lebrun, Madame, 261  
 Vigny, Alfred de, 180, 328  
 Villani, Giovanni, on Philippe le Bel, 68  
 Villehardouin, Geoffrey de, his Chronicle of Fourth Crusade, 63, 64  
 Villers-Cotterets, château at, 138  
 Villon, François, 121-124  
 Villon, Guillaume de, 121  
 Vinci, Leonardo da, in France, 134, 144  
 Visconti, Gian Galeazzo, Duke of Milan, daughter married to Louis, brother of Charles VI, of France, 94  
 Visconti, Valentine, 101  
 Visigoths, in France, 13, 14, 15  
 Viviani, René, prime minister, 361, 363  
 Voltaire, 248, 251-253, 256, 259, 260, 266  
 Vouet, Simon, 221  
 WAGRAM, battle of, 315  
 Waldeck-Rousseau, Pierre Marie, prime minister, in Dreyfus *affaire*, 357  
 Waldo, Peter (Pierre de Vaux), 55  
 Walpole, Horace, 242  
 Waterloo, battle of, 317  
 Watteau, Antoine, 239  
 Wellington, Arthur Wellesley, Duke of, 315  
 Werve, Claus de, sculptor, 97  
 Westphalia, Peace of, 180, 190  
 Whistler, James Abbott M'Neill, 367  
 William I, King of Prussia, 345; proclaimed German Emperor, 347  
 William II, German Emperor, 359  
 William the Conqueror, 35, 36, 37  
 William of Orange (William III of England), 224  
 Wilson, Pres. Woodrow, 391, 392  
 Wines, French, 42, 43, 44, 394  
 Wolsey, Cardinal, 142  
 YORKTOWN, battle of, 269  
 ZOLA, ÉMILE, 379, 380; *Débâcle*, 347; *J'accuse*, 356, 357









May 23 '57

OCT 21 1934

NOV 24 1940

MAR 27 1935

SEP 8 1942

Apr 13 '53

FEB 21 1936

DEC 4 1942

Oct 22 '53

MAR 19 1936

JUN 2 1936

JAN 14 1943

Feb 19 '54

DEC 4 1935

FEB 28 1937

APR 20 1943  
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Oct 24 '57

APR 29 1937

JAN 30 1938

Mr 27 '48

Nov 28 '54

FEB 12 1939

Jl 9 '48

Apr 13 '50

JUL 11 1939

APR 16 1940

Aug 23 '51

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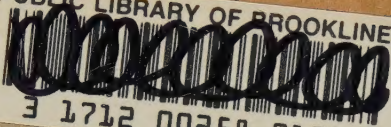
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